CHAPTER 10

The Crossett Hospital

The hospital has always been a primary source of pride and concern to company officials and citizens. The hospital has one tradition, the best care for the citizens of Crossett and surrounding area, but it has had three names: the Crossett Hospital, the Crossett Health Center, and Ashley Memorial Hospital. Every day of its existence the hospital has sought to improve services and equipment in order to give the very best and latest in medical care to its patrons. At the present time a cardiac unit is being added to the institution to better care for heart patients. This facility will eliminate many long and dangerous trips to Monroe, New Orleans, or Houston and possibly save many lives through the years.

Judging from a picture post card in the possession of Mrs. Grady Woods of Crossett, whose father established the first bottling plant in the city, the Crossett Hospital was an attractive building. It was two-story colonial with two upper porches enclosed by white bannisters. Large white columns lined the bottom porches, supporting the upper porches. The roof was gabled steeply and covered with wooden shingles, which was common in those days. The building was painted Crossett gray and trimmed in gleaming white. The front porch led into the offices but the north porch was converted into a driveway for ambulances. A white picket fence surrounded the hospital,

which faced Main Street on the east. The yard was carefully mowed and covered with bermuda and common grass.[1]

According to a bulletin published by the Crossett Lumber Company and an unknown author, in 1919 the hospital had 35 rooms and wards with a capacity of fifty-five patients. The entire structure was heated with steam piped from the mill by an overhead pipe line. Significantly, when all homes depended upon an outside toilet without a sewage system, the hospital had a complete sewage system and restroom facilities. There were two operating rooms, a sterilizing room, an X-ray room, a laboratory, and a dispensary. Few residents now realize that the hospital was then licensed as a training school for nurses. The rooms for patients were comfortably and completely furnished. It was the only medical facility of consequence between Pine Bluff and Monroe, Louisiana. However, in these early days people did not go to the hospital for minor illnesses. It was used mostly for sawmill patients who had been in accidents, burn victims or terminal patients. Most baby deliveries and common illnesses were treated at home by sawmill doctors. For minor bruises and scratches, one had only to drop in at the hospital and the wound was cared for at no charge.[2]

According to a report on the hospital provided by Mrs. Howard W. Gates, formerly the wife of Dr. Spivey, the hospital was established in 1904 or 1905, primarily for the treatment of sawmill accident victims. Dr. Ed Sparks was the first doctor employed at the hospital, which was financed wholly by the Crossett Lumber Company then. It seems that the institution was not used widely between the years 1908 and 1919. In 1919, Dr. Spivey was hired from a practice in Fullerton, Louisiana to head the hospital and bring it up to standard. Soon the hospital had everything any other hospital in the area could boast with a well-equipped operating room, sterilizing room, and refurbished patients' rooms. There was no delivery room since most deliveries then were done at home.

(Photo opposite page) A picture of the Crossett hospital built about 1904 or 1905 shown before additional wings were added. Dr. J. E. Sparks was the first director and remained until Dr. C. E. Spivey assumed the post in 1920. The first nurse was Miss Hannah Patterson, who later married Arthur McKimmey. The next nurse was Miss Ellis, aunt of Mrs. Clara Berry, who still resides in Crossett. (Courtesy of W. E. Hastings)

Three wings were added to the hospital in the Twenties and a delivery room was also added. Doctors from surrounding towns like Warren, Lake Village, and the Delta area sent patients to the Crossett hospital for better care. By the late Twenties, Dr. Spivey had gained a wide reputation as a surgeon. However, the trip to Crossett was difficult because of rough roads and long train trips. Patients were usually loaded onto trains and brought in by baggage coach by family members. The hospital did its best to provide comfortable accommodations for attending family members, and they were usually fed by the hospital. Dr. Spivey had a contract with the Crossett Lumber Company for the care of all its patients but those coming in from surrounding areas were also his responsibility. He charged seventy-five dollars for major surgery and a stay in the hospital cost the patient an additional dollar a day. The whole surgery treatment usually cost about $150.

Dr. Charles Edward Spivey, from Fullerton, La., who was director of the Crossett Hospital from about 1920 to 1944. He upgraded the hospital facilities, added some wings to the building, and hired more doctors. Old-timers remember dropping by the hospital to have a throat "mopped" or a bandage applied to a sore. (Courtesy of Mrs. Howard Gates)

Dr. Jesse Thomas Wood, a native of Fountain Hill. A graduate of the University of Arkansas School of Medicine in 1912, he practiced in his home town until 1925 when he joined the staff of the Crossett Hospital, a post he held until 1944. He returned to Fountain Hill to retire but continued to practice until 1967. (Courtesy of Fannie Lou Tatum)

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February 5, 1959, the 1958 net incon
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$6,836.[6]

Due to work load and the popularity of the hospital, Dr. Spivey began to hire other doctors to assist him. Some of the doctors whom he hired through the years were Dr. M. L. Smith, Dr. J. T. Wood, and Dr. E. O. White, who served the last Crossett Camp on Chemanihaupt Creek. Dr. Setzler was here when Spivey came to Crossett.

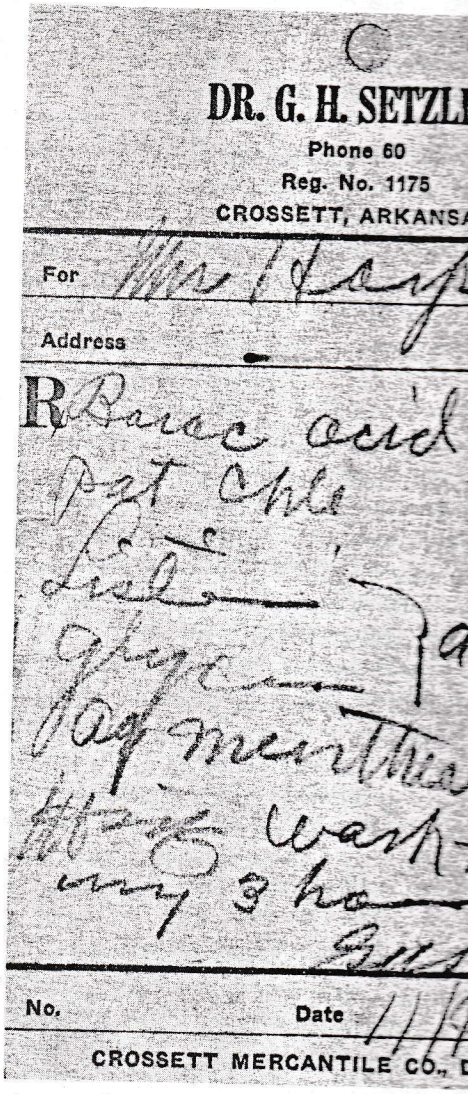
During much of this period, the Crossett Hospital was used as a licensed nurses training school. This nurses school was closed in 1937 due to an oversupply of nurses. One of the nurses trained in this institution through the years was Mrs. Howard W. Gates, formerly Edith Lyles, who later married Dr. Spivey and assisted him in the operating room and in training nurses. Others who trained in this school were Vera Stephens, Mrs. Frank Rawls, Mrs. Machen Roberts, Mrs. John Finch, and Alice Neal. Many others here and elsewhere both trained and began their service in the Crossett Hospital Nurses Training School.[3]

Miss Olivia Bingham gave the writer an undated bulletin entitled *The Crossett Health Center* outlining costs and benefits. For a monthly fee of $1.82 for an individual and $5.70 for a family, the person or family could receive complete hospital services. An abdominal operation cost only $100 and treatment of a fractured pelvis only $75. The company contributed half of the insurance premium. The insurance carrier was the Metropolitan Insurance Company of New York.

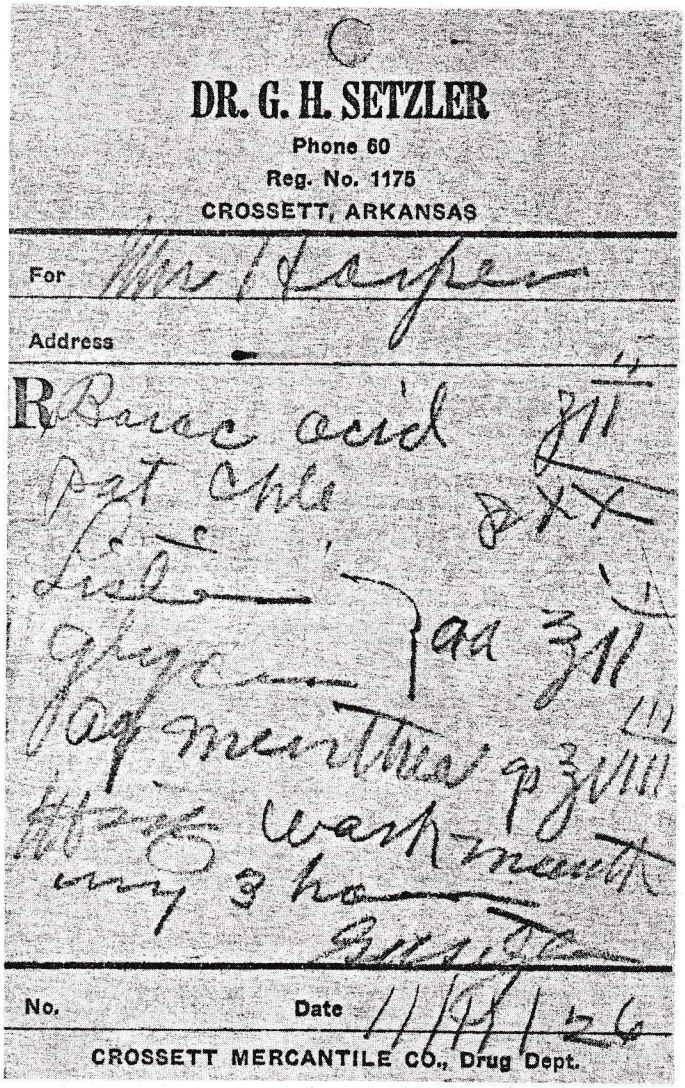
In 1939, a single employee got all hospital services for only $1.25 and the cost for a family was only $1.75. They received for this small premium the full services of a doctor, medical attention in the home, room and board at $1.00 a day, all operations, filling and extraction of teeth and ambulance service. Excluded from this policy were insanity and venereal disease.[4]

In 1957 the hospital adjusted its room rates. The old rates had been private room, $10; semi-private, $7; and ward, $5. The new rates were private room, $13; semi-private room, $9; and ward, $7.[5] These rates may have seemed exorbitant to many residents of the area but the new rates did not keep the hospital from losing money. According to the *News Observer* of February 5, 1959, the 1958 net income of the hospital was $24,384 and the next expenses went up to $31,221, for a loss of $6,836.[6]

A group of nurses from the Crossett Hospital made about 1937 or 1938 in front of the hospital. (l.-r.): Anna Belle Cox, Myrtle Carter Collins, Zeonia Haynes Wall, Letha Marsh Binns, Lila Gulledge Chesser, Edith Lyles Gates, Helen Pierce Meeks, Omie Cain Lowrey, Alvern Farrar Collins. Edith Lyles Gates was the second nurse to complete training in the Crossett Nursing School and then became an instructor there. Avis Pierce Reed and Willie Joe Brooks Rawls were the last two registered nurses to graduate from the Crossett Nurses Training School. (Courtesy of Fannie Lou Tatum)



A copy of a prescription written by Dr. G. The prescription was written for Nifty Bell Mrs. Harper. (Courtesy of Nifty Bellott)



DR. G. H. SETZLER
Phone 60
Reg. No. 1175
CROSSETT, ARKANSAS

For Mrs Harper

Address

R Boric acid 3ii
Pat Vas 3ii
Lac
Sol
Glyce aa 3ii
Aq menthae p 3viii
Use wash-mouth
every 3 hrs
Sig

No. Date 1/14/26

CROSSETT MERCANTILE CO., Drug Dept.

A copy of a prescription written by Dr. G. H. Setzler in 1926. The prescription was written for Nifty Bellott's grandmother, Mrs. Harper. (Courtesy of Nifty Bellott)

Miss Bingham's hospital scrapbook contains a circular dated January 1, 1968, that states, "Due to the minimum wage law, the schedule of daily rates, effective January 1, 1967, will be: Ward, $12; semi-private room, $16; private room, $20; private room with sharing lavatory, $22; private room with full bath, $26."

The X-ray room in the old hospital has an unusual history. Mrs. E. W. "Cap" Gates, the wife of the founder of Crossett, became ill with cancer in 1924. The reputation of the Mayo Clinic was widespread then and it was thought that she could recover if treated there. However, Cap Gates did not wish to have his wife so far away from home in Rochester, Minnesota. Since X-ray was the prescribed treatment, Gates and others decided to buy the equipment and do the treatment here. The General Electric Company sent an expert to Crossett to train Dr. Spivey and Nurse Edith Lyles to administer the treatments.

However, the hospital had no safe place at the time for administering the X-rays. Cap Gates built another wing to the hospital on the south end to house the X-ray machines. Though the wing was two stories to conform with the rest of the building, only one downstairs room was used. According to Mrs. Howard Gates, this room was lined with lead and the windows were lead-treated for protection from the X-rays. The X-ray therapist was protected by a lead-lined cubicle with a lead-treated window. The patient was covered with rubber except for the area being treated. Crossett, a little sawmill town, had an X-ray facility surpassing anything between Monroe, Louisiana and Little Rock, Arkansas. Mrs. Howard Gates still wonders what became of the vast amount of lead used in the X-ray room. It was probably sold for scrap when the new health center was erected.[7]

When the papermill came to Crossett in 1936, health care became more and more of a problem as the city's population expanded. In the early Forties, the Crossett Company and the citizens began thinking how to make better hospital facilities available to residents. Janice Clark wrote in a 1956 story in the *News Observer* that the company went to the Ford Foundation for advice and they sent Dr. Kingsley Roberts to look the situation over and make recommendations. He recommended the formation of a Crossett Health Foundation. He also recommended a new building to completely replace the old wooden

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the company. Accordingly, the Cross
was formed in 1945 by E. C. Crossett, J
R. Watzek.

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since it serves the entire county.

A booklet published for the formal
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structure and a prepaid medical health plan to be operated by the company. Accordingly, the Crossett Health Foundation was formed in 1945 by E. C. Crossett, J. W. Watzek, Jr., and A. R. Watzek.

The Crossett Lumber Company donated to the Foundation the land for a hospital site, the current furnishings of the hospital and funds to build and operate a new facility.[8]

In 1956 the members of the Crossett Health Foundation were Bill Norman, Sr., Bill Arnold, and Peter Watzek. The hospital is owned by the Crossett Health Foundation. It is a private, non-profit organization and no taxes are imposed for its support. Responsibility for operation of the hospital is invested in an administrator with the support and cooperation of the Health Foundation board.

The hospital in Crossett has had three names through the years, each indicative of its function at the time. In the beginning, it was simply the Crossett Hospital. It was built primarily for those injured at the mill and terminal patients. When the new hospital was built in 1948 and 1949, the name was changed to The Crossett Health Center. It functioned as a clinic as well as a hospital and provided general health care. Recently, the name was changed again to Ashley Memorial Hospital to make it more appealing to the citizens of the whole area. The name change may have made it more appealing to governmental agencies who have long provided immense aid to such institutions. The new name fits the institution better since it serves the entire county.

A booklet published for the formal opening of the new hospital in 1949 states:

> You will see a few of the 245 rooms that compose the structure, well furnished one and two bedrooms for patients, modern facilities for infant care, the latest type medical equipment, dental offices, clinic rooms, a service unit and treatment facilities for all types of diseases; you will see an efficiently planned building of latest architectural design, completely air conditioned, protected from fire by an overhead sprinkling system and many other things that form the physical side of an up-to-date hospital and clinic.
>
> These things that you will see are abreast of the latest developments of medical science. The facilities of the health center are available to everyone regard-

less of race, color or creed; their only purpose is to maintain and restore health. This Health Center was made available to the public through the joint efforts of the Crossett Companies and the government of the United States; of the total $750,000, the Crossett Companies donated $500,000 and the federal government the balance.

William Lacaze of New York City designed the building that houses the health center which was constructed by the contracting firm of Peterson, Garbi and Joseph of Little Rock, Arkansas.[9]

The Ashley Memorial Hospital is a handsome building of solid masonry, with trim of white and brownish-red pine lumber below the windows. Built before the energy crunch and to make it more attractive, windows and doors of glass cover almost the entire surface above the decorative boards. The entrance to what was originally the clinic and dental area is smaller but of similar design. The roof is flat.

In order to keep abreast of medical techniques and patient treatment, a new cardiac unit has been installed. The unit is in and beyond the area formerly used as a recovery area and stands mostly between the hospital and the Meredith House.[10]

The critical care unit includes facilities for coronary treatment and intensive care. The unit covers 1,750 square feet of space and accommodates six beds. There are four cubical rooms with two beds in the treatment area which can be used when needed. Coronaries are treated in the cubicle rooms first and may then be moved to another area. The coronary unit is staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. A registered nurse is on duty at all times.

Cost of the construction was $35,000. The charge for the intensive care unit is $210 per day, which does not include medication. The unit often stays full but sometimes falls to fifty percent of capacity, which is about what it should be. Monitors outside the rooms enable the nurses to keep tabs on patients. The monitor system is called telementry. Nothing is done inside the critical care unit without a doctor's order. Visiting hours are strictly limited in this facility to ten minutes and only one visitor per patient.

The hospital presently has sixty-one beds. Rates are generally lower than in many major hospitals. Coronary care is $100 a day. Private rooms are $86 a day and semi-private

rooms are $78 a day. At present there a
total annual payroll of more than $1.5
land, buildings and equipment is $1,7
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The hospital has an auxiliary calle
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The Crossett Health Center, now
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rooms are $78 a day. At present there are 115 employees and a total annual payroll of more than $1.5 million.[11] The value of land, buildings and equipment is $1,774,636 and the value of the Meredith House is $236,000. The hospital is fully air-conditioned and heated by a hot water forced-air system with electric power. Boilers are gas fired and a sprinkler system protects the entire building from fire. Officers and members of the Foundation at present are W. E. Hastings, chairman; Herman L. Hamilton, vice-chairman; and Richard Jones, secretary. Other members of the board are Otis Hicks, Mrs. Bryan Harris, Bert Jordan, Marolyn Lloyd, Edward McKee, W. M. "Doc" Bolin and Dr. D. L. Toon. Dr. J. D. Rankin is chief of staff. The board has three honorary members: Mrs. E. T. Allen, Mrs. John T. Erwin, and Grady Binns.

The hospital has an auxiliary called the Ashley Memorial Hospital Auxiliary. The officers are Mrs. Johnny S. Carter, president; Mrs. Bryan Harris, secretary; Mrs. J. Ben Posey, treasurer; Mrs. Jewell McBroom, first vice-president; and Mrs. Lola Brooks, president-elect. This auxiliary helps patients be a bit more comfortable during their stay and they are always on the job.[12]

In addition to the hospital itself and connected by a short covered walkway is the Meredith House, so named in honor of Richard Meredith, who served as chairman of the Foundation for many years. It is a retirement home constructed of brown brick with a gabled slanting roof, adding a pleasing touch to the hospital area. It has apartments to accommodate nineteen people who have to be mobile during their stay. All needs are supplied by the institution and it is only a wall away from hospital full services. All residents may go in and out as their condition permits. They may either have meals in their own rooms or be served in a common dining room. Perhaps the best feature is that each day, usually in the morning, someone looks in on them to see if everything is all right.

The Meredith House is just a further step in the Foundation's efforts to serve the health of the whole community and the whole person.

The Crossett Health Center, now the Ashley Memorial Hospital, has almost always been fortunate in enjoying the service of some of the finest practitioners in the state. With shortages almost all over the nation so common, Crossett remains an

exception with very able men supplying the medical needs of the hospital and the surrounding area. At present, six qualified physicians use the facilities of the hospital: Dr. R. L. Salb, Dr. Barry Thompson, Dr. W. R. Cothern, Dr. Luis Garcia, Dr. C. E. Ripley, and Dr. D. L. Toon. Dr. J. D. Rankin and Dr. C. E. Hicks of Hamburg also use these facilities. However Tom Pat Cook, hospital controller, says, "We could very well use another good general practitioner and a regular surgeon."

Notes on Chapter Ten

[1] Interview with Mrs. Grady Woods, Crossett.

[2] The Crossett Lumber Company, *To Crossett and Contentment*, (Crossett, Arkansas: The Crossett Companies, 1919).

[3] Interview with Mrs. Howard W. Gates, nurse in old hospital and former wife of Dr. Spivey, June 11, 1980.

[4] Scrapbook furnished by Miss Olivia Bingham and interview with author.

[5] Circular in Miss Bingham's scrap book.

[6] *The News Observer*, February 5, 1959.

[7] Interview with Mrs. Howard W. Gates.

[8] *The News Observer*, December 27, 1956.

[9] *The Crossett Health Center*, Hurley Printing, Camden, Arkansas.

[10] The author's inspection, June 14, 1980.

[11] From a speech delivered by John Nienhuser, administrator, to the Crossett Rotary Club, May or June, 1980.

[12] From notes by Miss Olivia Bingham, June 13, 1980.

CHAPTER

Railroad Roma

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Legend tells us that Rose Marie and I
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watchdogs. They had married in this very
Sawyers gave them when he threw his p

CHAPTER 11

Railroad Romance

If one wishes to find romance in a hurry, one that lasts forever, he can find it on the Missouri Pacific Railroad east of Crossett. Young people and some not so young have been seeking romance on these tracks at this place since the tracks were laid way back in the beginning of the century. Young people come to this particular spot to find romance because so many of this generation and of past generations have found it here and spread the word all over the nation. Recently a television producer in California heard of the peculiar romance-producing effects of this particular spot and called the writer, the local librarian and several other residents to verify the existence of the Light, as it is known in the area. He was assured that the Light is a reality and that it does something wonderful for romance seekers but he was not guaranteed a sighting, for the Light comes when it wishes and, apparently, only to those whom it wishes to grant its peculiar treasure.

Legend tells us that Rose Marie and David lived beside the new railroad that had recently cut through the wilderness in the early 1900's to the little tent town of Crossett. They lived in a small hut with only two rooms, a small kitchen and a larger bedroom. The great out-of-doors was their backyard, and their front as well, and the wolves, foxes and bobcats were their watchdogs. They had married in this very cabin which old man Sawyers gave them when he threw his pack on his back and

went to the rich glory land called Texas. They sat on the side of the railroad each evening and waited for the coming of the long train down the tracks from the county seat of Hamburg, thirteen miles away. Sometimes it was dark and the fireflies blinked in the night but at other times a soft, bright moon sifted gentle rays through the towering pines. On these bright moonlit nights they could hear the howl of the wolves off in the distance toward the Ouachita River and away south toward the thriving little town of White on the Arkansas and Louisiana line. Far to the east they sometimes heard the hoot owls nesting and whooping on West Creek and closer by, they could hear the noises of tent-town only a mile or so away, children yelling, teams traveling on the new road, cattle lowing and sometimes a drunk whooping. But it was a gentle place and they loved it with all their young hearts.

One night after they had sat and talked and kissed along time, David pulled Rose Marie very close, kissed her on the lips again, and said, "Little Baby, I have a job on this very railroad."

And she said, "Honey Child, you have a good job at the kilns at the mill."

He replied, "But this brakeman's job will pay twice as much and maybe we can begin planning for our baby."

She asked, "Are we gonna have a baby, Dumplings?"

He said, "Well, I thought that was the way things usually went when a boy and girl is all married and stuff like that."

And she said, "Yes, sometimes it does happen that away."

The railroad people were good to David and allowed him to catch the train in front of his house on the way out in the eastern run and sometimes he could just jump off the train as Rose Marie watched when he returned from the Delta run, which was almost every day. She developed the habit of walking with him to the tracks in the morning when his train pulled out toward Hamburg. Almost every day for six months she waited on the little mound of earth beside the tracks and wished for the early arrival of the great steam engine pulling a long string of cars to the freight yards. Sometimes she would step out into the middle of the tracks and gaze as far toward Hamburg as her bright blue eyes could see hoping to glimpse the smoke of the great engine or hear the shrill whistle that sounded a warning for the crossing near her house.

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And she said, like any lover might
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And he replied, "Ain't you the swee

No one knows what she said to him a
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said something mighty sweet and endur
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toward the door and paused just a second
hurried kiss on her soft lips.

She yelled at him as he ran toward th
the train giving blast after blast to warn
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The train did not arrive early that da
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cold. But every time she thought of him
little warmer. Then the sun went down
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She got sleepy even in the harsh cold but
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time she did fall asleep and then quickl
howled not ten feet away. She did not ru
that wolves were afraid of her.

Then about 10:30 that night when al
she was rudely awakened by the loud, shr
whistle. She was frightened, for the engi

The fall of the year shifted into winter and Rose Marie continued to sit on the little mound each day and wait for the coming of the great train. Sometimes she had to wrap up with a great quilt to keep from freezing as she waited, sometimes an hour or two, for her beloved.

It was one of those cold evenings that the train was very late but she stayed on until David skillfully alighted from the caboose and ran alongside the train until he had righted himself. The he walked back toward the mound but Rose Marie was running toward him. She threw her arms about his neck and her almost frozen lips buried themselves against his.

After a long kiss, David said, "My little darling, you have no need to wait up on this old mound for me. You just know I'll always be here when the train comes."

And she said, like any lover might, "And, sweetheart, I will always be awaiting for you even if the train does not come."

And he replied, "Ain't you the sweet one?"

No one knows what she said to him as he carried her in his strong arms to the little cabin in the woods, but he must have said something mighty sweet and enduring. Anyway, they lay on the soft feather bed until late in the morning and David was barely able to get his trousers and shirt on when he heard the shrill whistle of the outgoing Missouri Pacific train. He rushed toward the door and paused just a second in his flight to plant a hurried kiss on her soft lips.

She yelled at him as he ran toward the tracks, the engine of the train giving blast after blast to warn him of its arrival, "I'll be awaiting on the knoll when the train comes a-roaring in!"

The train did not arrive early that day as she had expected, but she sat on the little mound and waited and shivered in the cold. But every time she thought of him she seemed to get a little warmer. Then the sun went down and the shadows fell and the train still had not even crossed the dirt road at Bovine. She got sleepy even in the harsh cold but she dared not drop off to sleep for she thought he might never arrive if she did. One time she did fall asleep and then quickly awoke when a wolf howled not ten feet away. She did not run home for she knew that wolves were afraid of her.

Then about 10:30 that night when all the town was asleep she was rudely awakened by the loud, shrill blast of the engine whistle. She was frightened, for the engine was right upon her

by the time she had thrown off the quilt and stood on the mound beside the tracks.

She gazed far back on the train toward the caboose and saw her beloved David hanging with one hand onto the steel bars in preparation to land beside the tracks and take his darling into his strong arms. The engineer had slowed his train considerably because he knew that David wished to alight near his little cabin. David looked across the darkness but could not see Rose Marie smiling and waiting near the tracks. She looked down toward the caboose and saw him clearly by the light of the caboose window. He was not swinging his lantern for his last signal had been given. He was through for the day.

Then something must have happened for he dropped his lantern and it rolled into the ditch beside the roadbed. Then David steadied himself to alight. The trail beside the track was not smooth and at night it could be tricky. He had never detrained here in the dark and he was wondering if his little Rose Marie was still waiting.

Then she saw it happen in a flash, like lightening. David put his right foot forward, looked at the earth below his foot, and swung loose from the caboose. He ran along the tracks for a few steps and then she saw him stumble on a huge limestone rock, jerk himself upright and then bump his shoulder against the moving caboose. He stumbled again and lost his balance completely. He grabbed wildly at the moving train but his hands did not catch onto anything. Rose Marie was screaming at the top of her voice and running toward the tracks.

When they found her sitting in the middle of the tracks cradling his handsome, headless body in her arms, she was distraught and wild, screaming for her husband's head.

They buried him in the Unity Cemetery but without his head. She continued throughout the ceremony to cry out, "I want my David's head. I want my David's head."

The very next night after the funeral she took up the famous vigil and has kept it up ever since. She went to the railroad tracks as the darkness fell with her lantern and walked up and down the tracks, sometimes swinging the lantern up and down looking for her husband's head. It was never found by her or anyone else. Some say that his head was carried back to the Delta on the under-carriage of the locomotive. Others claim that a hungry wolf carried it away into the woods. But

Rose Marie is still looking for her love
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Rose Marie is still looking for her lover's handsome head each night and people can see the light of her lantern as she swings it up and down or sideways. But some evenings she does not come to look for the head, making some believe that she tires now and has to rest from her vigil. After all, she is nearing one hundred years of age and deserves a little surcease from watching.

So the supersitition has grown up that if one see the Light, there will be romance in his life and thousands from all over the country have come to prove it. Of course, many come and see nothing. Yet the evidence is too clear that something is there. A few examples will illustrate.

Recently a writer sent an article in to a paper of wide circulation detailing the mystery of the Light. People from all over the area read the article and many came to Crossett to see for themselves if the Light had magical powers. A busload of young people came one night from a large Baptist Church in a Louisiana town and many of them saw the Light. Moreover, many tried out the legend of the Light's power to bestow romance. It is a fact that the pastor of the Baptist Church from which the young people came had more weddings in the following month than in all his previous pastorate.

Minnie and Jack Storms had been having trouble and were determined to try out the magic power of the Light. It just so happened that they kissed at the second the Light appeared. They have never had another cross word.

Another busload of youth and some older people came to see the Light from Pine Bluff, Arkansas, 100 miles distant. It was a cold, dark night and they waited one hour and then two but the Light did not appear. Then as the bus driver was yelling for them to fill the bus and begin the return journey, the Light appeared. Half the busload of people saw the Light and kissed as it came and then went quickly away. Again there was a rash of marriages in Pine Bluff. One couple kissed thirteen times for they wanted thirteen children and each kiss was supposed to bestow at least one offspring. The last time anyone of the area saw Marie and Jimmy Sones, it was evident that she was on the way to beginning that family of thirteen.

However, Jerk Lively and Susie Lately were not so lucky. It happened that as the Light appeared and both saw it drop and rise, Jerk looked away and her kiss landed on his lower jaw. They soon began fighting instead of loving and Susie filed

for divorce. She kept saying, "If you had just kissed me on the lips when you saw the light, we'd be having a family now."

And he kept saying, "Damn the Light! We don't need no Light to make us a family. We need something else."

And she kept asking, "What else do we need?"

And he asked, "You don't really know?"

And she said, "Honey, if the Light can't do it, nothing can."

And he said, "Goodbye, Susie!"

Of course, this area is one of the most prolific child-bearing territories in all the state and the reason is not hard to find. Every couple knows that if they have trouble getting along or if they cannot have the children they wish, all they have to do is see the Light and it is all settled. Sometimes the track is crowded with seekers and the Light will not appear, for Rose Marie does not like the milling crowds and if she walks out into the night and the people are like a herd of cattle on the tracks, she may simply douse her lantern and go back into the cabin. Then crowds of people look and wait and look some more but the Light does not appear.

They say that this is the way you must go to the railroad tracks to see the Light if you wish its healing powers. A couple must pick a dark and preferably cold night and go alone long after darkness has settled over the forestland. Go quietly and park the car a little east of the tracks so that Rose Marie will not see the intruding machine. Then sit in the middle of the railroad quietly with the lips poised for a kiss. Keep waiting, for Rose Marie cannot be always on the tracks and she has to sleep sometime. Best results are obtained along about twelve o'clock, probably because most mere curiorsity seekers have given up by then. Also, it is near the time of night that Rose Marie's husband lost his head.

The couple should remember to keep the lips close together in a kissing position, all the time looking down the tracks for the Light. Nearly always the honest seeker will be rewarded. When the Light first flickers, the lips move to meet. When the Light comes quickly down, as it always does, the lips must meet in a firm, warm kiss. One must remember to keep his lips in position and plant the kiss quickly and firmly.

They say that those who followed these simple directions have almost always been blessed with a torrid love affair and

many children. Maybe that is the reas
much faster than most of Arkansas. N

many children. Maybe that is the reason the area is growing so much faster than most of Arkansas. Maybe not.

CHAPTER 12

Mayors and Development

The Gracious Lady in the midst of the forest near the Ouachita River did not look like a gracious lady in 1905. In fact, in many articles written at the time concerning Ashley County, Crossett is not even mentioned. It is not surprising, for the little town was to almost all who went that way just another sawmill town that could very soon cut out and cease to be. They could picture the management one day calling the employees together and telling them that the timber was all cut and the jobs were gone, the way of all sawmill towns in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. A few men would be kept on for a while to dismantle buildings and machinery and ship it away to another virgin forest for another short run of timber cutting. It was all so simple then. Money makers would move into an area like Crossett, build a big mill, devour the best timber, cut out after a while, and then simply disband and leave a barren sedge patch many miles in circumference.

But this town, this Gracious Lady, was not thus to be summarily forsaken and left to die an unnatural death. She would live on for nearly a century and then maybe for many centuries. So this unusual town began to make laws and elect officers and plan for a long, beautiful, eventful life. There was no railroad into the town but the local leadership with Cap Gates built their own railroad. There was no road into the city except that which the mill people had built to haul in their

materials. Cap Gates and the people built roads into their town from the south and the already thriving sawmill town of White, from the north and the county seat of Hamburg and west to the Saline and Ouachita Rivers. These rivers could be crossed for the journey into El Dorado when the rivers were low; if the waters were high, no one crossed. Access to Crossett was soon possible from any direction and people poured into the new town seeking work.

It was in 1903 that Cap Gates called the leading citizens of his town together, many of whom still lived in tents, and suggested that it was time to organize the town to keep order and assure that Crossett would develop properly. Being mayor of the town was not a tremendous task at this time because Cap Gates was the law and everyone knew that what he said was what would ultimately be done. However, from all accounts, he was a benevolent boss of the camp.

Out of this meeting came the first mayor of Crossett, A. M. Shaw, who resigned only three months later. Then in 1903, T. H. Caldwell was elected to finish Shaw's term. The mayor and other citizens seemed determined to make it a model town. High on their planning list was a town council which could guide the growth of the tent city for many years ahead. They also saw how essential it was to have laws that everyone could support.

It was under the administration of the third mayor, C. D. Oslin, that they planned and adopted the Ordinance Book.[1] In 1905, duties of the town council and all officers were drawn up and adopted. The first page gives these facts: The council shall meet the first Monday in each month, and five members shall make a quorum. Members may be fined for non-attendance and the vote of five members will remove any officer from office. If one misses any two successive meetings, his seat will be declared vacant. The recorder shall attend all meetings, be paid a salary of fifty dollars a year and be bonded by the state.

The town marshal always figured prominently in the conduct of city affairs. He was elected by the town council for a one-year term and had to be bonded for $450. His duties were to keep the peace, suppress riots, and arrest all offenders. He had a privilege seldom if ever used — he could call upon any citizen to help enforce the law and that citizen was compelled to comply. Finally, he had to remove anything offensive from

the town, including drunks. The mars
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Certain business establishments we
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the town, including drunks. The marshal had a salary of $70 per month and fifty percent of the fines for selling liquor. He also had to require that all stoves, chimneys and furnaces be safe. But the marshal's duties were more. He could require all males 25 to 45 to work on the streets three days each month.

The Crossett Lumber Company from the beginning considered the town its own and supported it liberally until they sold out to Georgia Pacific in the Sixties. However, the book of minutes of 1905 gives the source of revenues passed by the city council. Circuses paid $10 for each day in town. Minstrel concerts and side-shows paid $2.50 per day. For each billiard table, pool table or similar device, the charge was $25 per month and $18 for each additional table. Traveling vendors were charged $2.50 per day in advance. Peddlers were charged too: a two-horse wagon paid $100 per year, a one-horse wagon paid $65 and pack peddlers were charged $25.

Certain business establishments were charged as much as the traffic would bear. A shooting gallery was assessed $25 per year, a public auctioneer paid $5 annually, but a peddler of fresh meat had to pay $400 each year. In addition, the council passed an ordinance fixing a tax of five mills on all real and personal property.

Even a board of health was created in this period. It consisted of five members, presumably appointed by the mayor, and had the power to quarantine in case of epidemics. Apparently, at the same time a law was passed setting a fine of $100 for "affrays," and if anyone was maimed, the fine became $1,000 or a year in jail. It became unlawful to carry weapons, including a dirk, sword, knife, or pistol, inside the city. Cruelty to animals was forbidden. Cock fighting, bull baiting and similar cruel sports were forbidden. Disturbing the peace carried a $300 fine.

Crossett's tradition of being a dry community began with the founding of the town but was given legal force in 1905 with the passage of a law against the sale of intoxicating liquors. The fine ranged from $200 to $500. Election frauds carried a $20 fine and games of chance and betting were prohibited. Malicious mischief was against the law, too. Violation of the Sabbath was prohibited and no sales of any kind could be made on Sunday. Vagrancy and prostitution were prohibited, along

with remaining out after 8:30 at night, which was a misdemeanor and carried a $25 fine. Livestock were not permitted to run at large in the city. A bike rider had to dismount when meeting a pedestrian, and failure to do so carried a $1 fine.

Though Cap Gates and his business associates actually owned the town — and the town was not too impressive in those days — Cap always seemed to know that the town was not a passing fancy, or the usual sawmill town of the early 1900's. In laying out the town, Gates planned well, perhaps using other sawmill towns he had lived in as models of the wrong way to do it. Each residential lot was to be large enough for a comfortable house, garden, cowpen, privy and large front lawn. This could all be surrounded by a white picket fence which would be kept up, as were the houses, by the company itself. He had the foresight to leave large trees in all yards and in the business section. This model is still followed.

Development was Crossett's key word in the early years after the adoption of the city ordinances. The town grew, with the mill cutting more lumber each year and other roads and railroads making their way into town. The school grew with the town and the churches had good attendance. Mayors were uniformly good men and usually effective officials. Some of them served many terms and were a distinct blessing to the city. Because the salary was almost nil, the mayors and marshals had little incentive to continue in office.

Among those staying in office many terms was M. P. Dooley, who served at least five terms as mayor from 1909 through 1913 and then again from 1922 to 1924. During Dooley's first terms the town was growing up, the commissary was doing a remarkable business, streets were kept safe and clear and houses were still being built for many newcomers. The sawmills kept adding employees and the log trains pulled in more of the magnificent pine and oak timber from the forests. Expansion and its problems were the business of the company, and the city governing board seemed to have little effect upon these matters.

But matters of the city's moral welfare concerned the people and Mayor Dooley. In 1922 Dooley signed an ordinance prohibiting the transportation of intoxicating liquor into the city by any individual or corporation, punishable by a fine of $100 to $500. An ordinance was also passed prohibiting hogs,

sheep, goats or other livestock to run a
The Dooley family has long been promir
of Mayor Dooley's sons served as ca
president of the First National Bank
Dooley served in probably the most cr
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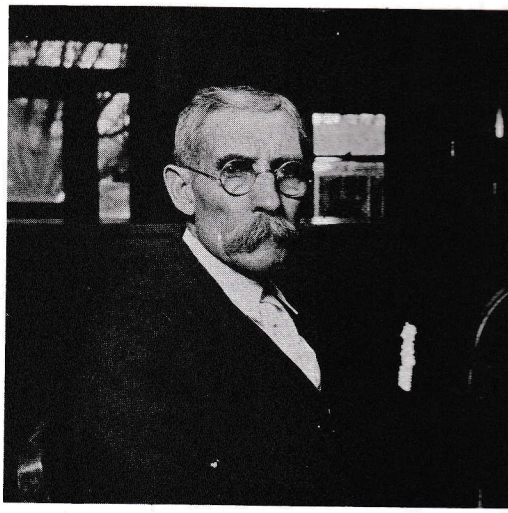

*M. P. Dooley, one of the early mayors of the ci
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Lawson graduated from the Massey
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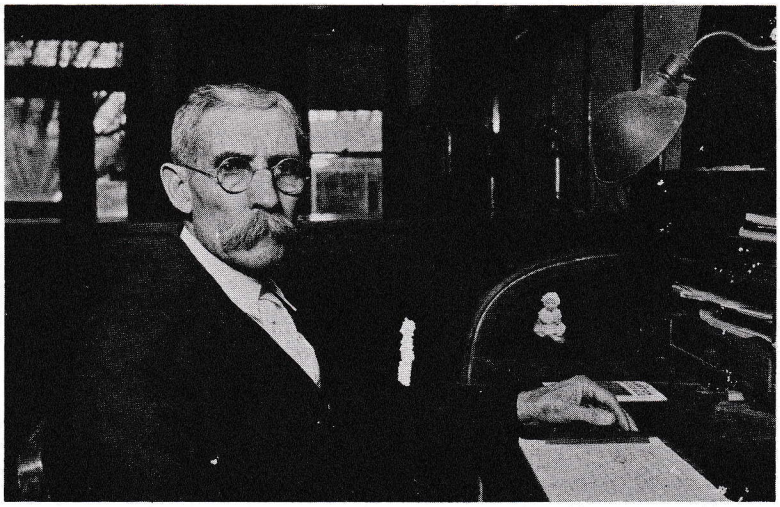
June, 1907. Lawson was a lifetime me
Methodist Church and on the Board of S

sheep, goats or other livestock to run at large on the streets. The Dooley family has long been prominent in the city and one of Mayor Dooley's sons served as cashier and then vice-president of the First National Bank for decades. Mayor Dooley served in probably the most critical period of development and growth in the city's early history.



M. P. Dooley, one of the early mayors of the city, sitting at his desk in the Crossett Club House. He was a friend of Cap Gates and came with him shortly after the company was formed. He was also a member of the School Board. After his retirement from the Planing Mill he became manager of the Club House until his death in 1932. (Courtesy of Mrs. Elmer Oslin)

James Edward Lawson was mayor in 1918 and 1919 and served with distinction. Several innovations came to pass during his tenure. The first traffic laws were enacted under this administration. The first city stock law was passed preventing cattle from roaming at large. It was during his administration that the first stop light was erected and the first concrete sidewalks were laid. A city park was created behind the First Methodist Church and south of the Rose Inn.

Lawson graduated from the Massey Business College in Houston with honors and married Miss Eleanor Vireck in June, 1907. Lawson was a lifetime member of the United Methodist Church and on the Board of Stewards most of the

time. He and Mrs. Lawson taught Sunday School and held many other offices. Their children were Mary, born in 1912; Dorothy, born in 1915; and Jimmie, born in 1918.

Mayor Lawson retired from active employment with the Crossett Company in April of 1953. He had served in many capacities in the Crossett mill but had also been employed as superintendent of the Hamburg Sawmill. His job at retirement was General Plant Manager of the Sawmill Division. Mr. Lawson was not new to Crossett when he joined the Crossett Company in 1908. His father was at one time Ashley County Judge and also practiced law for many years.[2]

Iley M. Barnes served as mayor from 1923 to 1936. He was born October 18, 1889, came to Crossett as a young man and spent the remainder of his life serving as an employee of the Crossett Company and as either councilman, recorder or mayor of the city. Until 1946, the town was totally controlled by the company. Hazen Bryant, who came to Crossett in 1922, says that the city government was ineffective although it had a mayor and five councilmen. He served as councilman in 1936 and 1938. The city government was probably ineffective because the company not only owned everything but paid the bills as well. In those days, those who reached retirement age had to move away since housing was only for company employees. Though the Crossett Company was probably more benevolent than most large companies that owned towns, it still determined the way of life for all the people and town officials dared not risk offending the company.[3]

The book of minutes in the mayor's office shows that I. M. Barnes was recorder and signed a traffic ordinance April 4, 1921 to regulate automobile speed. In those days traffic laws were frequently considered. One of the more important ordinances was for a five-mill city tax for general operations. The city council members were E. C. Aiken, W. S. McKimmey, J. M. Willis and E. C. Gates. Evidently there was a vacancy at the time.[4]

The significance of the Barnes administration is probably in its duration from 1923 to 1936. As the country boomed in the Twenties, so did Crossett. Then the depression came in 1929 and money was scarce for everyone but the city cooperated with the government in relieving suffering. Jobs were provided often just to see that a man had something to eat and his

family had shelter. It is said that the
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In 1930 an ordinance made it unlawful to possess any intoxicating liquors and carried a fine of $50 to $150. The same day an ordinance was passed making it unlawful to drive a vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotic drugs. In September 1930 an ordinance was passed granting the Public Utilities Company a franchise to furnish gas for the city and rates were set for both commercial and individual use.[5]

Iley Barnes was Mayor from 1923 to 1936. During his administration many advances were made to benefit the city. In 1930 ordinances were passed making it unlawful to possess any intoxicating liquors and granting the Public Utilities company a franchise to furnish gas for the city. (Courtesy of Minnie Finch Barnes)

The council in 1935 saw the need to better support their city officers and raised the salary of the mayor to $50 per month and that of the marshal to $125 per month. The recorder was paid $12 per month.

This long administration was good for the city in almost every respect and Mayor Barnes was a kind, friendly man genuinely concerned about the welfare of the residents. But with

the coming of the papermill and an influx of hundreds of people, the city was rapidly changing. The company was thinking of ultimately turning the town over to the citizens to operate and finance. When Mayor Barnes was offered a position with the new mill in 1936, he had to resign as mayor. Perhaps no mayor, unless it was Vaskell Carter, served the city through so many changing times and did it with such grace and efficiency as did Mayor I. M. Barnes. He died April 9, 1962, and is buried in Pinewood Cemetery just north of the city.

One of the finer mayors of Crossett was George Lessor, who had been superintendent of the planer mill for many years. In 1942 Lessor led the town and the industries in a defense bond drive that met all its goals and contributed to the war effort. Bicycle riding to and from work was encouraged in order to conserve rubber for the national effort. The town was crowded as the mills ran full steam and many more men and women were employed. People who worked on oil rigs near the city were seeking places to stay. They were advised to contact H. Adcock, housing manager, if they needed lodging.[6]

On May 28, 1942, Peter Watzek was made General Manager of the Crossett Industries. Watzek had come to Crossett some years previously and trained himself in the industries by working in many areas in both the sawmill and the papermill. Residents still tell stories of having a cigarette with Peter Watzek on the job or his asking another employee for a cigarette. In June 1942 Edwin Bird was made assistant superintendent and stayed on until retirement.

Women were encouraged to take the vacated jobs of men who had enlisted in the armed services. Though the company ran many facets of community life at this time, Lessor was an effective mayor with a very small salary. In April of 1943, the town bought a fire truck. It was rapidly becoming apparent to the mayor that new housing and new businesses would have to be arranged for by the company or by private initiative. But the war went on and the enthusiastic efforts of the citizens never lagged.

In January 1944, D. C. Hastings, the long-time school superintendent, wrote an article for the *Forest Echoes* entitled "After the War What Then." He answered many questions about settling back into a peaceful routine and making better

use of lives than ever before. An honor r
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pany, opened a new studio on October 18,
distinguished career as the city's photogra

use of lives than ever before. An honor roll of those who went away to the war was erected on Main Street opposite the Masonic building. The attractive plaque contained hundreds of names, and during the unveiling ceremony the representatives present were Cortez Moore, civilian; Robert W. Beames, Marines; W. M. Fourtner, Navy; and William S. Arnold, Army.[7]

The need for additional homes was so great that the company in 1945 opened the Westwood Addition, west of Cremer Avenue and the Cremer Hotel. Soon thereafter Forest Park Addition was opened east of Elm Street and southwest of Camp Road. *Forest Echoes* notes here with much pleasure that Lynn Yarborough re-entered the coaching profession at the end of the war. He had, like many others, worked in industry here during the war effort.[8]

It was during the Lessor administration that the Annual Family Day tradition began with the Fourth of July holiday. It featured a great feast, foot races, boxing matches, sack races and everything one could possibly eat with a grand prize for some lucky winner, usually a bicycle. This tradition was not just for the whites of the city but for everyone, though the blacks had their own celebration in their section of town. Lessor welcomed the coming of the Chase Bag Company to the city to provide additional employment. A milk products plant owned by John Carpenter was opened back of the Burr Store to furnish fresh milk for the growing town. And a new hospital was being planned and a Board of Governors was appointed including Peter F. Watzek, K. O. Elderkin, Richard P. Meredith, Dr. D. V. Smith, Moody Moore, E. L. White, and Mrs. John T. Erwin.[9]

Lessor saw his town grow into a city and approach the vision of Cap Gates. In January 1946 he was notified that Crossett had become a first-class city. The company began selling homes to anyone, old homes and new homes, and as it did so, the people repaired, renovated and enlarged the old Crossett gray houses. The company also built an addition in North Crossett and sold the homes. In 1947, one of the finest civic clubs, the Lions Club, was chartered. Neil Rhodes, who had been a photographer many years but continued to work for the company, opened a new studio on October 18, 1947, and began a distinguished career as the city's photographer.[10] After Neil's

death, the City Library purchased the thousands of negatives in his files. His widow, Lillian, has spent countless hours organizing them for use for historical purposes. Rhodes was elected president of the Arkansas Professional Photographers Association in March, 1953.

The years between 1946 and 1955 were significant in Crossett history, for the city's life underwent dramatic change. Additions to the west, south and east as well as in North Crossett were dedicated to new residences and houses could then be built for $5,000 to $10,000.

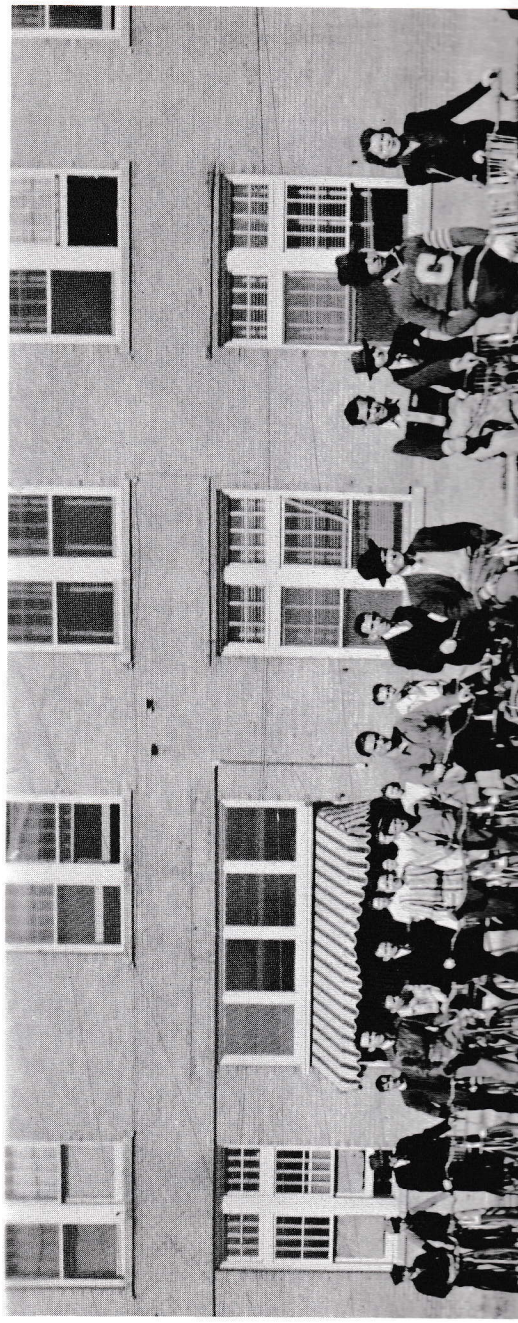
It was in this period that Charles F. Tatum became mayor for two terms until his death late in his second term. Tatum was a businessman and owned the two independent grocery stores in the city, one at Ninth and Main Streets and the other near the end of Third Avenue in what was then called the colored section. He was active in the First Baptist Church as chairman of the deacons and chairman of the building committee which erected the present modern sanctuary. He was also an ardent deer hunter and horseman and a distinguished Mason.

The bronze plaque just outside the front door of the municipal building reads:

Crossett Municipal Building, Erected 1954
Building Committee:
J. B. White, Chairman,
J. H. Abbott, Jim Armstrong,
R. E. Bell
C. F. Tatum, Mayor
Aldermen: C. S. Love, Wade Moffatt, W. B. Jenkins, J. M. Armstrong, J. H. McCormick, J. B. Posey
Trapp, Clifford and Phelps, Architects
C. W. Vollmer and Co., Inc., Builder[11]

Unfortunately, Mayor Tatum was ill with heart trouble from which he never recovered.

(Photo opposite page) The caption for this picture published in Forest Echoes *in March, 1943 says "Crossett Employees Help Set Trend—Wheel to Work To Save Rubber." During World War II businesses and private citizens did their best to conserve and help with the war effort. Many people rode bicycles to work to save auto tires. Those identified include Esther Kincheloe, Ben Posey, Rubel Johnson, Charles Moses, James Powell, Billy Barnes, and Herman Quinn. (*Forest Echoes*Files)*



(Photo opposite page) Moody Moore (r.) of th
Committee presents a T-Flag to Mayor Geor
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"Treasury T Town" during World War II.
the basis of 90 percent or more of the busi
Payroll Allotment Plans, along with other re
took place November 13, 1943 with represen
and other distinguished guests present. May
in 1901 and made many contributions to the

Ordinance Book, Section One, says as mayor was an ordinance regulatin January 1952. In April of the same year age was made available to all city emplo a large tract of land south of Main Stree Street was donated by the Crossett Co school purposes. On November 7, 1952, a was passed by the people.[12]

Improvement districts were estab city in July, 1953, and an ordinance was activities of mind readers, fortune teller mancers and imposing on them a fee of an ordinance was passed to issue bonds fo est rates at 3.35 per cent to finance the hall. Also $10,000 was appropriated for

The headstone in the Crossett Cemet story of Mayor Tatum:

Charlie F. Tatum 1890-1955
Ada L. Tatum 1892-1971[13]

Vaskell Norman Carter holds the rec accomplishment among the many mayor office from January, 1955 through Decer four-year administration of Mayor A. B again inducted into office for another fo uary, 1979. He was born March 27, 1915 Katherine Carter, was born October 26 have three sons: Norman, Robert Harris Mayor Carter is a member of the Presby Mason. He has served one term as presid Municipal League and has been on the e for twenty years. His sports are bird hu lights in, and deer hunting, which he tole

(Photo opposite page) Moody Moore (r.) of the Arkansas War Finance Committee presents a T-Flag to Mayor George Lessor. The city of Crossett was the first municipality in the United States to be designated a "Treasury T Town" during World War II. The honor was granted on the basis of 90 percent or more of the business enterprises setting up Payroll Allotment Plans, along with other requirements. The ceremony took place November 13, 1943 with representatives of the Army, Navy, and other distinguished guests present. Mayor Lessor came to Crossett in 1901 and made many contributions to the city. (Forest Echoes *Files)*

Ordinance Book, Section One, says that Tatum's first act as mayor was an ordinance regulating advertising signs in January 1952. In April of the same year, social security coverage was made available to all city employees and in November a large tract of land south of Main Street and north of Florida Street was donated by the Crossett Company to the city for school purposes. On November 7, 1952, a five-mill property tax was passed by the people.[12]

Improvement districts were established for most of the city in July, 1953, and an ordinance was passed regulating the activities of mind readers, fortune tellers, palmists, and necromancers and imposing on them a fee of $250. August 6, 1953, an ordinance was passed to issue bonds for $200,000 with interest rates at 3.35 per cent to finance the building of a new city hall. Also $10,000 was appropriated for a new fire engine.

The headstone in the Crossett Cemetery tells the rest of the story of Mayor Tatum:

Charlie F. Tatum 1890-1955
Ada L. Tatum 1892-1971[13]

Vaskell Norman Carter holds the record for longevity and accomplishment among the many mayors of Crossett. He held office from January, 1955 through December, 1974. After the four-year administration of Mayor A. B. Moore, Carter was again inducted into office for another four-year term in January, 1979. He was born March 27, 1915, and his wife, Mary Katherine Carter, was born October 26, 1917. The Carters have three sons: Norman, Robert Harris, and Frank Peyton. Mayor Carter is a member of the Presbyterian Church and a Mason. He has served one term as president of the Arkansas Municipal League and has been on the executive committee for twenty years. His sports are bird hunting, which he delights in, and deer hunting, which he tolerates.[14]

Charles F. Tatum became Mayor for two terms and died late in his second term. He was Mayor when the new Municipal building began construction in 1954 but did not live to participate in the dedication services. He built the first brick home in Crossett, an important first for a lumber town. (Courtesy of Reginald Tatum)

Mayor Carter entered his first term as mayor with a program of progress already underway. In the late Forties, the Crossett Company had begun to sell out holdings in the city to the people and a spirit of progress was being demonstrated on every hand. The voters had voted for the erection of a city hall and were almost ready for the dedication by January, 1955. However, due to some necessary delays in construction, dedication was delayed until June. Carter considers this dedication of a modern city hall as one of the crowning events of his administration.

Governor Orval Faubus was on hand for the principal address of the day. A big parade and many other special events preceeded the dedication. Representatives were present from all over the county and from many cities over the state. Representatives of the State Fair Association, the Arkansas Rating Bureau, the State Library Commission, and the Chamber of Commerce were also on hand for the festivities.

The edifice was constructed of solid masonry and housed the city jail on the second floor, the fire station and the police

station as well as the city library, a cl
chambers and general meeting and co
building was financed with a $200,000
years. Enough money was left over to pu
engine. The thirty-year bond issue was
years. The library has moved into the ol
but the other departments are still hous

Since the company had begun to se
progress was rapid and continuous. On
first acts was the complete paving o
Highway 82 through town to the city lim
Street had been only partly guttered an
ground drainage. In cooperation with t
ment it was completely paved from gut
ground drainage installed and gutters b
four-lane street. Paving of almost all oth
was also completed as additions were ma

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about nine miles from the city and a po
industries of Crossett would, he thinks,
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Association actively helped secure this p
ident of the Ouachita River Valley Asso
1976. With the aid of the Crossett Chamb
the Ouachita River Valley Association, th

Other developments came ste
administration. The city purchased its ow
which makes water cheaper for the reside
ment has become a fifth-class fire dep
departments for cities Crossett's size a
eighth. The police force has increased fr
second-hand automobile to twelve polic
cars. The fire department has steadily
stock law is now strictly enforced.

A principal difficulty in the Fifties
cities has been the integration of all public
schools. In Crossett, that has been accom
civil disturbance or notable incident. The
agreement over integration, but there h
versal cooperation.[15]

station as well as the city library, a clerk's office, a judge's chambers and general meeting and conference rooms. The building was financed with a $200,000 bond issue for thirty years. Enough money was left over to purchase a $10,000 fire engine. The thirty-year bond issue was paid off in only seven years. The library has moved into the old post office building, but the other departments are still housed in the city hall.

Since the company had begun to sell out to the citizens, progress was rapid and continuous. One of the new mayor's first acts was the complete paving of Main Street from Highway 82 through town to the city limits. Before this, Main Street had been only partly guttered and there was no underground drainage. In cooperation with the Highway Department it was completely paved from gutter to gutter, underground drainage installed and gutters built the length of the four-lane street. Paving of almost all other streets of the city was also completed as additions were made from time to time.

One of Carter's pet interests has been the nine-foot channel and port for Crossett on the Ouachita River. The river is only about nine miles from the city and a port convenient to the industries of Crossett would, he thinks, materially add to the economy for the present and the future. The Ouachita Valley Association actively helped secure this port. Carter was president of the Ouachita River Valley Association from 1974 to 1976. With the aid of the Crossett Chamber of Commerce and the Ouachita River Valley Association, the port seems assured.

Other developments came steadily under his administration. The city purchased its own water department, which makes water cheaper for the residents. The fire department has become a fifth-class fire department when most departments for cities Crossett's size are rated seventh or eighth. The police force has increased from four men and one second-hand automobile to twelve policemen and four new cars. The fire department has steadily been upgraded. The stock law is now strictly enforced.

A principal difficulty in the Fifties and Sixties in many cities has been the integration of all public facilities, including schools. In Crossett, that has been accomplished without any civil disturbance or notable incident. There was not universal agreement over integration, but there has been almost universal cooperation.[15]

Mayor Vaskell Carter with city officials about 1968. (l.-r.): G. D. Kilcrease, Vaughn Pistole, City Clerk Nelson Toler, Mayor Carter, R. F. Kennedy, J. R. Tutt, W. E. Hastings, and City Attorney Thomas Streetman. Carter holds the record for longevity. The dedication of the Municipal building was only one of many highlights in his administration. (Sullins Library Collection)

The city airport has been steadi
carries a high rating for a city Crosset
Crossett Ordinance Book show that th
have been vastly improved and au
period.[16] Crossett has an unusual asset i
which has approximately 100 acres of la
perhaps sixty acres. It has picnic tables,
a zoo, a Little League ball park, and a p
the park which many use for recreation
powerful motors are allowed on the lak
anytime.

More recently, the Ramada Inn has
Norman Senior High School. It is a thor
of rustic construction that compleme
woodlands. The restaurant in the inn is
Among the last accomplishments of this
building of the Forest Echoes Vocational
north of the city and the development
tion, a residential area.

Carter does not take credit for all the
his administration but gives credit to the
sett Company and the Georgia Pacific

Former Mayor A. B. Moore is ma
Potts and they have four children, A
Marian H., and Frank M. A. B. was born
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Georgia Pacific, then continued with the
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mayor from 1975 through 1978.

Moore was described by a writer for
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problems" He was a graduate of the Un
with a Bachelor's degree in chemical en

An interview with the reporter fo
reveals his belief in Crossett. He believes
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Georgia Pacific Company. He notes that
ports the town but is not paternalistic as t

The city airport has been steadily improved and now carries a high rating for a city Crossett's size. Minutes in the Crossett Ordinance Book show that the recreation facilities have been vastly improved and augmented during this period.[16] Crossett has an unusual asset in the Lucas Lake Park, which has approximately 100 acres of land and a lake covering perhaps sixty acres. It has picnic tables, pavilions, boat ramps, a zoo, a Little League ball park, and a paved walkway circling the park which many use for recreation and a nature trail. No powerful motors are allowed on the lake but people may fish anytime.

More recently, the Ramada Inn has built just south of the Norman Senior High School. It is a thoroughly modern edifice of rustic construction that complements the surrounding woodlands. The restaurant in the inn is named the Woodlands. Among the last accomplishments of this administration is the building of the Forest Echoes Vocational Technical School just north of the city and the development of the Dogwood Addition, a residential area.

Carter does not take credit for all the developments during his administration but gives credit to the citizens and the Crossett Company and the Georgia Pacific Corporation.

Former Mayor A. B. Moore is married to Marguerite Potts and they have four children, A. B. III, William F., Marian H., and Frank M. A. B. was born in Haynesville, Louisiana, and came to Crossett in 1937 to work for the old Crossett Company. He continued to work for them until they sold to Georgia Pacific, then continued with the new company and became manager of their paper division. In all, he worked for the company forty-one years. At retirement, he said, "I just wanted to do something constructive for the city."[17] He was mayor from 1975 through 1978.

Moore was described by a writer for the *News Observer* as "having a friendly low-key type way of dealing with people and problems" He was a graduate of the University of Arkansas with a Bachelor's degree in chemical engineering.

An interview with the reporter for the *News Observer* reveals his belief in Crossett. He believes that growth will continue on account of the good employment base provided by the Georgia Pacific Company. He notes that Georgia Pacific supports the town but is not paternalistic as the old Crossett Com-

Streetman. Carter holds the record for longevity. The dedication of the Municipal Building of many highlights in his administration. (Sullins Library Collection)

pany was. Moore believes that the people should be involved in city government. He takes credit for nothing but believes that all accomplishments were brought about during his tenure by cooperation between the city council and the people.[18]

However, though Moore does not take credit for anything, some good things were done under his administration. The Ordinance Book reveals some interesting ordinances. On October 17, 1977, curfew was passed for minors on Halloween. On December 21, 1976, certain lands were annexed to the city. On October 18, 1976, the city was rezoned. Most interesting was an ordinance prohibiting public drinking of alcoholic beverages in the city, effective July 21, 1975. Another ordinance was passed to assist industries in pollution control, June 30, 1975.[19]

The police and fire departments were upgraded during Mayor Moore's tenure. He seems to be particularly proud of the completion of the city park to make it one of the best in the state. Even though Mayor Moore does not take credit for anything, the citizens most probably would have gladly re-elected him for a second term had he chosen to run.

Notes on Chapter Twelve

1 The Ordinance Book of Crossett, Arkansas.
2 *Forest Echoes*, (April, 1953).
3 Interview with Hazen Bryant.
4 Minute Book, City of Crossett.
5 *Ibid.*
6 *Forest Echoes*, (May, 1942). Announcement attached to issue.
7 *Ibid.*, (January, 1944).
8 *Forest Echoes.*, (July, 1945).
9 *Ibid.*, (October and November, 1945).
10 *Ibid.*, (October, 1947).
11 Municipal Building.
12 Ordinance Book of Crossett, Section 1.
13 Crossett Cemetery, author's inspection.
14 Interview with Vaskell Carter, September 16, 1980.
15 *Ibid.*
16 Ordinance Book of Crossett.
17 *The News Observer*, December 27, 1978.
18 *Ibid.*
19 Ordinance Book of Crossett.

CHAPTER

Firsts & Fiddlings i

First men's shop established by W.
1947.

First segregated mule . . . Water
woods gangs who would turn to the blac
drunk from the water bag. (Cora Mae Su
1980)

First independent shoe store, establ
at 211 Main in 1950. (Wade Tull)

First customer in first shoe store
(Wade Tull)

First gazebo . . . at the end of Main
of Commerce building stands now; later
First National Bank. (Harry Stephens)

First cannery . . . just west of
Commerce building. For community u

First baby born in Crossett . . .
August 7, 1902. (His own statement; also
Observer) Statement made November 2

First quarantine, for yellow fever

First football game against Fordyce
Fordyce won 21-0.

First basketball team composed o
McEntire, Jess Richards, Roy Dooley,

CHAPTER 13

Firsts & Fiddlings in Crossett

First men's shop established by W. N. Hunter, October 8, 1947.

First segregated mule . . . Water boy rode a mule to the woods gangs who would turn to the blacks after the whites had drunk from the water bag. (Cora Mae Summers, December 27, 1980)

First independent shoe store, established by Wade M. Tull at 211 Main in 1950. (Wade Tull)

First customer in first shoe store . . . Mike McDaniels. (Wade Tull)

First gazebo . . . at the end of Main Street where Chamber of Commerce building stands now; later moved to park west of First National Bank. (Harry Stephens)

First cannery . . . just west of present Chamber of Commerce building. For community use. (Harry Stephens)

First baby born in Crossett . . . W. R. Williams, born August 7, 1902. (His own statement; also Janice Clark in *News Observer*) Statement made November 23, 1980.

First quarantine, for yellow fever . . . 1905.

First football game against Fordyce . . . December 7, 1907. Fordyce won 21-0.

First basketball team composed of Frank Moffatt, Gus McEntire, Jess Richards, Roy Dooley, Brymer Courson.

First railroad to come into Crossett . . . Mississippi, Hamburg and Western, 1902. (*Forest Echoes*, December, 1957)

C. C. Carroll . . . first sales manager for Crossett Company. (*Forest Echoes*, January, 1958)

Neil Rhodes, Crossett's first professional photographer, was elected the southwest's outstanding photographer in Fort Worth, April, 1954. (*Forest Echoes*, May, 1954)

First championship basketball team . . . Eugene Aiken, Harry Cannon, Edward Gates, Charlie Williams, Jesse Dooley, Stewart Erwin, John Cooper, Coach Carl Hancock. (*Forest Echoes*, August, 1956)

First Rock Island train pulled into Crossett . . . September 15, 1906. (*Forest Echoes*, August, 1953)

First drive-in . . . Highway 82 West; A. H. Fuglar, July, 1950. (*Forest Echoes*, August, 1950)

Crossett had a Hampshire Club and a big gilt sale in 1920. . . Cap Gates was encouraging people to raise good produce as the mill would likely cut out in a few years.

Crossett Company hired a farm agent to help farmers develop better stock and all kinds of livestock and produce.

Neil Rhodes was the first professional photographer to set up business in Crossett.

The first cotton gin was on Stephens' place about where Dr. Toon lives now. (Harry Stephens)

First traffic light erected 1919, Mayor Lawson.

First paved sidewalks, 1919, Mayor Lawson.

First brick residence, the C. F. Tatum home, Oak Street.

First fire warden in Ashley County, Mr. Eugene Watt. Lindsey Watt's grandfather and close friend of Cap Gates.

Radio station KAGH opening announced for October, 1950. (*Forest Echoes*, October, 1950) Jack Fleet, owner.

First school, 1902, Second and Main, one room. (*Forest Echoes*, February, 1951)

First municipal airport opened April, 1951. (*Forest Echoes*)

First black logging contractor, James Henderson. (*Forest Echoes*, June, 1951)

First God and Country Award to Carl Love, for Desoto Area. (*Forest Echoes*, August, 1951)

First football game played in 1907 . . . Team: Gus McEntire, Roy Dooley, Brymer Courson, Ben Hall, Amon

Smith, Henry Easterling, Archie Sinex, F
Moffatt, Louis Holiman, John T. Erwin
(*Forest Echoes*, October, 1957)

A Mr. Rainey, a circuit rider, preache
Crossett in a tent. (*Forest Echoes*, June,

First wedding in Crossett, February
Thomas to Mr. Arthur Smith, the Revere
ciating at the Methodist parsonage. (*Fore*
1958)

First town marshal, Wilson Hig
Echoes, March, 1959)

First hotel located where Masonic Lo
burned in 1903. (*Forest Echoes*, July, 195

First sawmill in Crossett was a smal
produce lumber to build homes for pe
named Number I.

In June, 1962, work had begun clearin
water reservoir, now Lake Georgia Pac
June, 1962)

C. F. Tatum purchased the first
property on West Third Street, May 10,

The Scribers bought the first pie
business property November 11, 1959.

December, 1946, the first private hou

First automobile was owned by Cla
(*News Observer*, May, 1950)

Thirty-one men organized first Lions
1947.

First newspaper published in city li
Lowell L. White, December, 1949.

First editor of *Forest Echoes*, Ben Pose

First Safeway store opened August, 1
April, 1951)

First Bank of Crossett established
Capitol stock $25,000, surplus $1,309.93. (
records)

E. W. Gates was the first president of t

First professional baseball team org
Crossett Millers.

First funeral home, on Third Avenue

First Crossett boys to receive the Ea

Smith, Henry Easterling, Archie Sinex, Fred Fletcher, Frank Moffatt, Louis Holiman, John T. Erwin, Percy Gallagher. (*Forest Echoes*, October, 1957)

A Mr. Rainey, a circuit rider, preached the first sermon in Crossett in a tent. (*Forest Echoes*, June, 1958)

First wedding in Crossett, February 4, 1903, Miss Jimmie Thomas to Mr. Arthur Smith, the Reverend A. M. Shaw officiating at the Methodist parsonage. (*Forest Echoes*, December 1958)

First town marshal, Wilson Higginbotham. (*Forest Echoes*, March, 1959)

First hotel located where Masonic Lodge building stands, burned in 1903. (*Forest Echoes*, July, 1957)

First sawmill in Crossett was a small temporary unit to produce lumber to build homes for permanent residents, named Number I.

In June, 1962, work had begun clearing for Crossett's first water reservoir, now Lake Georgia Pacific. (*Forest Echoes*, June, 1962)

C. F. Tatum purchased the first piece of developed property on West Third Street, May 10, 1950.

The Scribers bought the first piece of undeveloped business property November 11, 1959.

December, 1946, the first private house was purchased.

First automobile was owned by Clark Buchner, 1906. (*News Observer*, May, 1950)

Thirty-one men organized first Lions Club, February 16, 1947.

First newspaper published in city limits of Crossett by Lowell L. White, December, 1949.

First editor of *Forest Echoes*, Ben Posey, September, 1939.

First Safeway store opened August, 1938. (*Forest Echoes*, April, 1951)

First Bank of Crossett established December, 1913. Capitol stock $25,000, surplus $1,309.93. (First National Bank records)

E. W. Gates was the first president of the Bank of Crossett.

First professional baseball team organized 1937, called Crossett Millers.

First funeral home, on Third Avenue, March, 1941.

First Crossett boys to receive the Eagle Scout badge . . .

Horace Vincent, Billy Finch, October 22, 1941.

First realtor in Crossett, Scott Campbell, began his business September 1948. First office in back of old bank building. (Mrs. C. S. Boyd, 1403 Cypress, Crossett)

First independent dress shop, Mr. Tommy Clarkson. (J. C. McGoogan)

Junior Chamber of Commerce organized, May 1940 . . . Thomas L. Reynolds, president; Ben Posey, vice president; Normie Johnson, secretary; Arnold Gifford, treasurer; members George Alcorn, William Upton, Jr., Fayette Thompson, James Bryant, A. W. Duskin.

First meeting of the Junior Chamber of Commerce . . . May, 1940.

C. I. Burchfield, Sr., assisted in planting the pines on what is called the cattle farm on the Unity Road just east of town. Used a shovel and trompted in each seedling in 1930's.

Sterling Store opened March 15, 1947, under the management of Odell Elliott. (*Forest Echoes*, March, 1947)

C. I. Burchfield was appointed the first forest ranger in June, 1928. Levi Wilcoxon managed the forests. (Mrs. Lula McKinney, January 15, 1980)

In 1925, 40 families of the Gates Camp were moved to the Crossett Camp on Chemanihaupt (McKinney)

Mrs. Lula McKinney (formerly Mrs. C. I. Burchfield) had four children, each one born in a different logging camp. (McKinney)

Berea, the home of Levi Wilcoxon, once boasted a sawmill, a gin, a store, post office, two churches, a one-room school, Dr. Kimbrough by name, a drugstore, a Woodman Lodge Hall. It was the center of a big trade area.

First Barnhardt loader arrived in Hamburg for the new mill in Crossett along with a mile-long train of other big machinery, May 7, 1902. (*History of Ashley County*, Etheridge appendix)

T. H. Caldwell took over management of the Beanery in May, 1903. (*History of Ashley County*, Etheridge appendix)

The Bank of Crossett was organized May 14, 1903, paying 4% on time deposits.

In 1913, the Ashley Drew and Northern Railroad from Crossett to Monticello was completed the first week in October. (*History of Ashley County*, Etheridge appendix)

Crossett Masonic Lodge Number
dedicated its new hall January 8, 1
County, Etheridge appendix)

September 1, 1920, Crossett lost n
by fire. (*History of Ashley County*, Et

March 17, 1937, the Crossett pape
J. C. Hair was manager. (*History of As*
appendix)

The Crossett Chemical Company
1931 with E. M. Godat as manager. (*Hi*
Etheridge appendix)

First independent jeweler, Bob
Building began July 15, 1947, with Ke
ager.

Crossett's first brick building, the
1913.

Cap Gates Park opened August 23
homesite of Cap Gates. The Riding Cl

April 6, 1952, the Church of God h
their new building on South Main a
(*Forest Echoes*, April, 1952)

September, 1952, Jack Tucker wa
the Arkansas Telephone Association. (
1952)

April, 1953, Silas D. Snow was
Arkansas State Teachers College, Con

Groundbreaking for the Church of
block of Pine Street, November 26, 195
committee were Roy Mitchen, O. L. Hay
Parnell. (*Forest Echoes*, December, 19

First service in St. Mark's Episcop
December, 1951

March 30, 1952, the Crossett C
dedicated. (*Forest Echoes*)

July 17, 1949, ground was broken fo
Church, J. W. Buckner, pastor. (Testim

Crossett's first new high school bui
School was dedicated March 5, 1950, o

February 19, 1950, first services
Methodist Church on Main Street. Me
committee were Edwin W. Bird, I

Crossett Masonic Lodge Number 576, chartered in 1904, dedicated its new hall January 8, 1914. (*History of Ashley County*, Etheridge appendix)

September 1, 1920, Crossett lost nine dry kilns of lumber by fire. (*History of Ashley County*, Etheridge appendix)

March 17, 1937, the Crossett papermill began operations; J. C. Hair was manager. (*History of Ashley County*, Etheridge appendix)

The Crossett Chemical Company began production in 1931 with E. M. Godat as manager. (*History of Ashley County*, Etheridge appendix)

First independent jeweler, Bob Elliott's in Masonic Building began July 15, 1947, with Keathley Scission as manager.

Crossett's first brick building, the Masonic building, built 1913.

Cap Gates Park opened August 23, 1949, built on former homesite of Cap Gates. The Riding Club built the arena.

April 6, 1952, the Church of God held the first service in their new building on South Main and Waterwell Road. (*Forest Echoes*, April, 1952)

September, 1952, Jack Tucker was elected president of the Arkansas Telephone Association. (*Forest Echoes*, October 1952)

April, 1953, Silas D. Snow was named president of Arkansas State Teachers College, Conway, Arkansas.

Groundbreaking for the Church of Christ Church on 300 block of Pine Street, November 26, 1950. Members of building committee were Roy Mitchen, O. L. Hays, E. L. Ware, John E. Parnell. (*Forest Echoes*, December, 1950)

First service in St. Mark's Episcopal Church was held in December, 1951

March 30, 1952, the Crossett Church of Christ was dedicated. (*Forest Echoes*)

July 17, 1949, ground was broken for the new First Baptist Church, J. W. Buckner, pastor. (Testimony of J. W. Buckner)

Crossett's first new high school building since the Green School was dedicated March 5, 1950, on South Main Street.

February 19, 1950, first services were held in the new Methodist Church on Main Street. Members of the building committee were Edwin W. Bird, Leroy White, R. M.

McGregor, W. A. Phillips, Richard Jones, T. M. Walsh, Mrs. Earl Rice, Mr. and Mrs. John T. Erwin, A. T. McDonough, J. B. White, O. E. Holmes, pastor.

Otho Taylor was first president of the Kiwanis Club which was organized January, 1954. Wade Moffatt was elected secretary. (*Forrest Echoes*, January, 1954)

Crossett Chemical Company first produced Tall Oil in 1953. (*Forest Echoes*, February, 1954)

Peter F. Watzek dedicated the Civic Auditorium April 28, 1954. (*Forest Echoes*, May, 1954)

Leslie H. Moore was elected president of the Arkansas Hotel Association for 1955. (*Forest Echoes*, December, 1954)

Crossett's first City Hall was dedicated by Orval Faubus, May 14, 1955, Vaskell Carter, Mayor. (*Forest Echoes*, May, 1955)

Al Nelson was given the Key Man award by the Junior Chamber of Commerce in May, 1955. (*Forest Echoes*, June, 1955)

The first baseball practice field was located about where Sears is on Alabama Street about the middle of the block.

Employees of the Crossett papermills who belonged to a Federal Credit union re-elected the following officers: Bill Wiggins, president; Herbert Norrell, vice president; George Ethridge, treasurer; Clay White, Cliff Ray and Truman Ellerbe, directors. (*Forest Echoes*, February, 1958)

The first postmaster in Crossett was E. H. Finch; Miss Addie Herst was his assistant. (*Forest Echoes*, June, 1957)

In 1946, a spring forestry school was established by Yale University on Crossett property about a mile east of town on Unity Road by Dr. Walter H. Meyer. (*Forest Echoes*, April, 1958)

The Crossett Company Foundation was established to channel part of the company's corporate donations. Officers were Peter F. Watzek, president; Richard P. Meredith, vice-president; A. F. Johnson, treasurer; Paul Sullins, secretary; and Clyman Izard, assistant secretary.

The first major building in Crossett was the Club House which stood about where the library now stands, 1905-1906, donated by E. S. Crossett. (*Forest Echoes*, June, 1959)

Walter Hill was the father of Max Hill, mayor of Hamburg, Arkansas. He was the first barber in Crossett and

cut hair in a tent. He charged 25¢ for
shave. He also cut hair at the Crossett C
He made enough money at this to buy
Hill, Mayor of Hamburg, January 19,

The first post office stood in firs
about the middle of the block, where
Echoes, January, 1960)

The first sawmill in Crossett was
to produce lumber to construct the fir
known as Number I Sawmill and used
milling.

The first passenger engineer on th
into Crossett was George Bushy. The f
was Isam Harrison. The first freigh
Reading. (*Forest Echoes*, January, 196

The ten-hour workday was institut
(*Forest Echoes*, December, 1958)

A forestry class from Yale Univer
1912. (*Forest Echoes*, April, 1958)

Howard Lemons was the first Com
George Ritchie was the first logging fo
June, 1958)

In 1920, the YMCA was located
where the Paul Sullins Library now s
April, 1920)

Tom Toler was one of the first wood
(Photo 1902)

In November, 1961, Crossett Flake
Crossett's newest woods product. (*Fore*
1961)

In 1914, there was a grist mill in the
ran every Saturday.

Frank Hancock won the 880-yard d
1916, Crossett's first champion. (Frank

Frank S. Cannon lived in one of the
in Crossett, and was one of the first m
Beanery from about 1924 to 1930. He
keeper, was secretary of the school bo
played dominoes with Cap Gates most
Hancock, daughter)

Temple Baptist Church held its firs

cut hair in a tent. He charged 25¢ for a haircut and 15¢ for a shave. He also cut hair at the Crossett Camp on Chemanihaupt. He made enough money at this to buy 180 acres of land. (Max Hill, Mayor of Hamburg, January 19, 1981)

The first post office stood in first block of Main Street about the middle of the block, where Triggs is now. (*Forest Echoes*, January, 1960)

The first sawmill in Crossett was a small temporary unit to produce lumber to construct the first permanent sawmill, known as Number I Sawmill and used for the duration of sawmilling.

The first passenger engineer on the Missouri Pacific line into Crossett was George Bushy. The first passenger fireman was Isam Harrison. The first freight engineer was a Mr. Reading. (*Forest Echoes*, January, 1961)

The ten-hour workday was instituted in Crossett in 1906. (*Forest Echoes*, December, 1958)

A forestry class from Yale University visited Crossett in 1912. (*Forest Echoes*, April, 1958)

Howard Lemons was the first Commissary manager and George Ritchie was the first logging foreman. (*Forest Echoes*, June, 1958)

In 1920, the YMCA was located on Second and Main where the Paul Sullins Library now stands. (*Forest Echoes*, April, 1920)

Tom Toler was one of the first woods foremen in Crossett. (Photo 1902)

In November, 1961, Crossett Flakeboard was announced, Crossett's newest woods product. (*Forest Echoes*, November, 1961)

In 1914, there was a grist mill in the industrial area which ran every Saturday.

Frank Hancock won the 880-yard dash in the state meet in 1916, Crossett's first champion. (Frank Hancock)

Frank S. Cannon lived in one of the three first houses built in Crossett, and was one of the first mayors. He ran the Old Beanery from about 1924 to 1930. He had been head bookkeeper, was secretary of the school board at one time, and played dominoes with Cap Gates most evenings. (Mrs. Ruth Hancock, daughter)

Temple Baptist Church held its first baptizing service in

Lucas Pond a few weeks after organization. (J. W. Buckner, pastor)

Marion Albert Carter saw the first board laid to begin the town of Crossett. (Cora Lee Carter)

Josie Rickman was a midwife here who worked with Dr. Smith. She delivered Johnny Carter. (Cora Lee Carter)

Judge Lochala owned the land around what is now the rodeo arena. Cap Gates wanted his house on a ridge, so he and Judge Lochala traded.

Sam Boyer was superintendent of mill no. 2. He moved here from Missouri and had a very large family. They lived in a house behind the Y that had 13 rooms with a 55-foot sleeping porch. (Velma Hays has a picture of the girls while they were in grade school)

Garland Hughes was Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Arkansas, 1957-58. (Records of Grand Lodge of Arkansas)

J. W. Buckner was Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Arkansas, 1957-58. (Record of Grand Lodge of Arkansas)

First Crossett Eagle High School newspaper, September, 1938 . . . (Mrs. O. L. Toney, formerly Lanell Walsh.)

A flat-car feeder or stall, is on a place now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Crockett Smith. Iron braces the length of the car are dated May 10, 1904, probably made in St. Louis. Made of a common flat-car with space on car for feed and high walls, about twelve feet. The sides let down for moving and lift up to protect oxen when in place for a period. Flooring is original 2 x 12 planking with 4 x 4 and 4 x6 framing inside, bolted together with heavy iron bolts.It is 43 feet long and 30 feet wide when in place with the sides down. Troughs are still in place on each side, one yoke of oxen feeding in a divided trough. The car is still very steady with 6 x 6 x 12 oak sills. Walls were of dressed pine lumber 1 x 4's. Covered with ancient galvanized sheeting, weathered and bent. This feeder-car is almost as old as Crossett. Car was pulled from temporary camp to temporary camp by the local shay engine . . . when timber in the area was cut over, it was moved again. (Inspected by J. W. Buckner, January, 1981)

Bruce Switzer won the 100 and 220-yard dashes in the 1962-63 state track meet at Arkadelphia; at the Meet of Champions, he set the state record for the 2

Switzer, April 9, 1981)

The first welding machine ever b
Company is now stored in the salvage ya

There was once a steamboat landing
just west of White where the boats dis
and passengers coming up from trips t
brought their groceries, farming tools,
liquor in New Orleans and often came or
to Extra Landing. (Judge Billy Switzer

Ovid Switzer owned the first Weste
in West Crossett, built in 1934 and 193

Ovid Switzer served on the F
Commission twenty-seven years as of A
given an engraved plaque celebrating hi
his twentieth year. He served two time
commission. Legislation was passed cre
Commission Emeritus honoring him. He
member of the commission. (From Swit
1981)

Ovid Switzer was state senator 193

F. H. Switzer, Ovid's father, was se

F. A. Switzer, Ovid's grandfather, h
mill and gin north of Macedonia . . . his chi
three girls, graduated from Hambur
account of distance and roads, they had t
to attend school during the winter. All w
of Arkansas but only one finished. (Con
Switzer, January, 1981)

The Bank of Crossett was organized,
ridge)

The Reverend A. M. Shaw was mayo
(Etheridge)

The town of White burned January
four stores, a hotel, the post office, and a
ridge)

June 19, 1904, the Methodist Chu
(Etheridge)

January, 1904, the Crossett area was n
district. Directors were C. A. Buchner, M.
R. M. Courson, C. C. Carroll, and L. L. Hor

pions, he set the state record for the 220-yard dash. (Bruce Switzer, April 9, 1981)

The first welding machine ever bought by the Crossett Company is now stored in the salvage yard of Georgia Pacific.

There was once a steamboat landing on the Ouachita River just west of White where the boats discharged merchandise and passengers coming up from trips to New Orleans. They brought their groceries, farming tools, cloth, furniture and liquor in New Orleans and often came on the same boat with it to Extra Landing. (Judge Billy Switzer, May, 1981)

Ovid Switzer owned the first Western Auto Store, located in West Crossett, built in 1934 and 1936. (J. W. Buckner)

Ovid Switzer served on the Parks and Tourism Commission twenty-seven years as of April 21, 1981. He was given an engraved plaque celebrating his 26th year and one of his twentieth year. He served two times as chairman of the commission. Legislation was passed creating the position of Commission Emeritus honoring him. He has been elected a life member of the commission. (From Switzer's office, January, 1981)

Ovid Switzer was state senator 1935 and 1936.

F. H. Switzer, Ovid's father, was senator 1927-1929.

F. A. Switzer, Ovid's grandfather, had a sawmill, planer mill and gin north of Macedonia . . . his children, three boys and three girls, graduated from Hamburg High School. On account of distance and roads, they had to board in Hamburg to attend school during the winter. All went to the University of Arkansas but only one finished. (Conversation with Ovid Switzer, January, 1981)

The Bank of Crossett was organized, May 14, 1903. (Etheridge)

The Reverend A. M. Shaw was mayor of Crossett in 1903. (Etheridge)

The town of White burned January 10, 1904, destroying four stores, a hotel, the post office, and a barber shop. (Etheridge)

June 19, 1904, the Methodist Church was dedicated. (Etheridge)

January, 1904, the Crossett area was made a special school district. Directors were C. A. Buchner, M. P. Dooley, T. A. Rice, R. M. Courson, C. C. Carroll, and L. L. Honeycutt. (Etheridge)

August 14, 1911, a million feet of lumber in sheds was destroyed by fire. (Etheridge)

In 1919, nine dry kilns of lumber, valued at $100,000 were destroyed by fire. (Etheridge)

Dr. George Hilliard Setzler, practicing physician in Crossett, was born in South Carolina, October 22, 1864. He was educated in the common schools of Chester, Mississippi, and entered the Hospital Medical College in Memphis, Tennessee. He graduated in 1896, and practiced in Delta, Mississippi. Afterward he did post-graduate work in the Hospital Medical College in Memphis and in Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Dr. Setzler then practiced in Hamburg, Arkansas, until 1907, then moved to Whitlow, a village just above Crossett and stayed until 1910. He came to Crossett in 1910. He married Miss Ollie Poole and they had three children. Dr. Setzler was Methodist, a Mason and Royal Arch Mason and belonged to the local and state medical societies. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, Vol. II)

Frank Cannon was one of the first citizens of Crossett and served two terms as mayor. His position was chief accountant for the Crossett Lumber Company. Cannon was a native of Wisconsin, born January 23, 1867. He attended the common schools of Denver, Indiana and afterward moved to San Francisco where he was employed as office clerk for the Transcontinental Association. Later, he worked for the Union Pacific Railroad Company in Salt Lake, Utah. Cannon came to Crossett in 1902, and assumed the position of general accountant from 1908 to 1918. He was active in civic affairs and served on the school board and the city council. He was married in 1892 to Miss Catherine Guatmey and they had three children. Cannon was a Presbyterian, a Mason and member of the Woodmen of the World, and the Eastern Star. During the war, he was very active on the Liberty Loan Committee. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, Vol. II)

Allen W. Bird was sales manager for the Crossett Lumber Company for many years. He was born in Wilmar, Arkansas, November 25, 1875. His father was Irby A. Bird, his mother Marianna Anderson Bird. Bird's father was county judge, justice of the peace, state representative and member of the school board. Allen was educated in the public schools, Hen-

drix College and Henderson College. A
superintendent of schools in Dermott, A
came to Crossett October 16, 1902, after
positions with several other lumber comp
head of the sales department of the Crosse
in 1920. Mr. Bird was Methodist, and a me
of Pythias. They had two children, Edw
(*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, V

Marshall Patterson Dooley served fo
long career as superintendent of the plani
sett Lumber Company. He was born in Co
nessee July 26, 1861. He was educated in
Columbia County. He came to Arkansas in
employee of the Crossett Lumber Compar
came mayor of Crossett in 1909 for s
married in September, 1888, to Miss Mol
had eleven children, eight boys and thr
Methodist, a Mason and a member of t
World. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*,

Edgar W. (Cap) Gates was born in
February 19, 1866. After several years o
northwest, he came to Arkansas to work
in 1886 with twenty-five cents in his pocl
he moved to Wilmar where he worked for
1900. Gates moved to Hamburg in 1900
large tract of land for a new mill which w
in Crossett. In Crossett Gates led in the
Crossett Lumber Company, one of the
panies of the South. Crossett became his p
he and Mrs. Gates are buried in the loca

In 1892, Gates married Miss Rose K
and they had three children. Cap Gates
active in local church affairs. He was a Ma
member of the Knights of Pythias. To C
credit for the development of the Crosse
and the city of Crossett. (*Centennial Histor*
Vol. III)

Clark Buchner was born in Lancaster
1872, and educated in the common school
consin. He moved to Wilmar, Arkansas in
ner was running the Hamburg Stave Co

drix College and Henderson College. At one time he was superintendent of schools in Dermott, Arkansas. Allen Bird came to Crossett October 16, 1902, after serving in important positions with several other lumber companies. He was made head of the sales department of the Crossett Lumber Company in 1920. Mr. Bird was Methodist, and a member of the Knights of Pythias. They had two children, Edwin W. and Carrol D. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, Vol. III)

Marshall Patterson Dooley served for many years of his long career as superintendent of the planing mill for the Crossett Lumber Company. He was born in Columbia County, Tennessee July 26, 1861. He was educated in the public schools of Columbia County. He came to Arkansas in 1886 and became an employee of the Crossett Lumber Company in 1902. Dooley became mayor of Crossett in 1909 for seven years. He was married in September, 1888, to Miss Molly Kinnebrew. They had eleven children, eight boys and three girls. Dooley was Methodist, a Mason and a member of the Woodmen of the World. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, Vol II)

Edgar W. (Cap) Gates was born in Scott County, Iowa, February 19, 1866. After several years of employment in the northwest, he came to Arkansas to work at the Thornton mill in 1886 with twenty-five cents in his pocket. From Thornton, he moved to Wilmar where he worked for the lumber mill until 1900. Gates moved to Hamburg in 1900, where he bought a large tract of land for a new mill which would later be located in Crossett. In Crossett Gates led in the development of the Crossett Lumber Company, one of the major lumber companies of the South. Crossett became his permanent home and he and Mrs. Gates are buried in the local cemetery.

In 1892, Gates married Miss Rose Kinnebrew of Wilmar and they had three children. Cap Gates was a Methodist and active in local church affairs. He was a Mason, a Shriner, and a member of the Knights of Pythias. To Cap Gates goes major credit for the development of the Crossett Lumber Company and the city of Crossett. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, Vol. III)

Clark Buchner was born in Lancaster, Wisconsin, April 9, 1872, and educated in the common schools of Lancaster, Wisconsin. He moved to Wilmar, Arkansas in 1894. In 1898, Buchner was running the Hamburg Stave Company for the Gates

brothers. In 1899, he became assistant manager of the Crossett Lumber Company. He married Miss Addie Norman of Hamburg in 1899. Buchner was a Presbyterian, a Mason, a Shriner and a member of the Elks Lodge. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, Vol. III)

George R. Lessor was born and raised in Childersburg, Alabama April 27, 1873. From 1892 through 1898, he worked in the planing mill at Fordyce, Arkansas. He came to Crossett in 1901 and became manager of the planing mill. Lessor was married to Miss Hattie Graham, January 30, 1898. Lessor became prominent in church and civic affairs of the city and served as mayor several terms. He was a prominent Mason, a Methodist and a Shriner. (*Centennial History of Arkansas*, 1922, V. III)

D. Henry Pendergrass moved to Crossett in 1905, worked at the Crossett Mills, had thirteen children, many of whom still reside in Crossett.

Forest Echoes for February, 1947, lists officers of the city: George Lessor, mayor; Norman Dolan, police judge; Julia Pierce, treasurer; and Iley Barnes, clerk. Ward No. l: Earl Madden, alderman; Carl Love, alderman; and Murray Elton, central committeeman. Ward 2: W. B. Runyan, alderman; John Anders, alderman; and C. H. Talley, central committeeman. Ward 3: Paul Kays, alderman; Kone Crossland, alderman; and George Alcorn, central committeeman.

First manager of the Bank of Crossett was Frank S. Cannon. (First National Bank archives)

First president of the Bank of Crossett was Cap Gates. (First National Bank archives.)

The Bank of Crossett, First National Bank was chartered December 22, 1913. (First National Bank archives)

Depositors were "segregated" on record . . . 580 white depositors . . . 420 Negro depositors. (First National Bank archives)

First State Bank began operations January 9, 1964. (Interview with bank president, Jack Walsh)

Clifton Trigg was first president of First State Bank. (Interview with bank president, Jack Walsh)

H. L. Wood was one of the first depositors in the bank. (Interview with bank president, Jack Walsh)

First board of directors of First State Bank were Ovid

Switzer, Victor Scott, Wagner Adams,
Johnson. (Interview with bank presider

Switzer, Victor Scott, Wagner Adams, Jimmy Smith, Willis Johnson. (Interview with bank president, Jack Walsh)

CHAPTER 14

Join a Club

Crossett has always been blessed with civic organizations. The oldest and most prominent club still serving this area is the Pine Hurst Club, a women's organization whose purpose is the improvement of the home and its surroundings. This fine club was organized in 1919 while the Crossett Lumber Company was still trying to improve farming and livestock in the area, for it was still believed that the lumber company would soon cut out and simply move away as most pine mills in the area did in those days.

At this time the company had on its pay roll Miss Ruby Mendenhall and W. R. Rich, who devoted full time to helping farmers better their living conditions just in case the mill did move away. One chilly afternoon in November 1919, a group of ladies in the community met under the direction of Miss Mendenhall and organized the Pine Hurst Club, which is still going strong after sixty-three years. Officers of this club were Mrs. W. D. Carter, president, Mrs. W. D. Laney, vice-president, Mrs. Albert Hancock, secretary, Mrs. Henry Stephens, Mrs. J. W. Brooks. Mrs. Clara Wall, Mrs. T. J. Malloy and Mrs. John Crow, members.

They met in the Locke schoolhouse for organization, a few miles west of Crossett, then a center for activities of a thriving community. Though records for two years have been lost, this organization has recorded its meetings and activities through

two wars, a great depression, and great prosperity, always rendering the finest service to the community and Ashley County.

In 1964, the club had a grand reunion commemorating forty-five years of distinguished club work. Mrs. T. J. Malloy was chairperson of the committee with Mrs. Mattie Green, Mrs. F. C. Morton, Mrs. R. A. Parkhill, Mrs. H. H. Crow, Mrs. J. W. Brooks, Mrs. Marie Hancock, Mrs. Henry Stephens and Mrs. W. D. Laney. Mrs. Fred Moore was club president and members were Mrs. Roy Berry, Mrs. L. H. Johnson, Mrs. M. L. Kinnaird, Mrs. C. H. Croom, Mrs. Harry Parkhill, Mrs. J. A. Gardner and Mrs. M. V. Rice. This reunion climaxed forty-five years of enjoyment, loving service and intense activity for the second oldest Home Demonstration Club in Arkansas.

In 1966, another reunion was held in similar fashion with reunion members appointing committee members consisting of Mrs. T. J. Malloy, Mrs. F. C. Morton, Mrs. R. A. Parkhill, Mrs. Mattie Sue Green, Mrs. J. W. Brooks, Mrs. Marie Hancock and Mrs. Henry Stephens. Mrs. Fred Moore was County Council President at the time. Crossett says a thousand thanks to these women who have endured almost every condition, good and bad, to assure better things for Crossett.

Now, after sixty-three years of service to Crossett, the state and Ashley County, the Pine Hurst Club continues the remarkable work it began in the dawn of the century. Officers for 1982 were Mrs. Oscasr Leelman, president; Mrs. Harry Parkhill, vice-president; and Mrs. Barbara Kinniard, secretary-treasurer. The club always has a special project during the year. In 1983, the special project was the Carousel School.

The work program is always well adjusted and in keeping with the needs of the day. Each month a program is presented from among their special projects and the club pays special attention to housing and energy, health foods and nutrition, citizenship, cultural arts, safety, family relations and child development and recreation.

Every woman in the area is eligible to become a member of this most successful club and reap the rich benefits of their programs and associations. It is believed that the next sixty-three years will be even more far reaching and successful than these first remarkable decades.

(Note: The foregoing has been taken fr
Bulletin, written by Anna K. Carter
Stephens Green and Hazel Stephens Parkl

(Note: The foregoing has been taken from the Pine Hurst Bulletin, written by Anna K. Carter Malloy, Mattie L. Stephens Green and Hazel Stephens Parkhill, 1976.)

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Personal Interviews

John H. Allen
Early resident of city, former employee of Crossett papermills and Crossett sawmill, resides at 1205 Cedar.

Miss Olivia Bingham
Secretary and bookkeeper for the Crossett Health Center.

Mrs. Jimmie Lawson Boyd
Daughter of one of first mayors, in real estate business in city.

Hazen Bryant
One of the earliest residents of Crossett and long-time manager of the power plant.

John W. Buckner
Author, minister, long-time resident of Crossett.

Mrs. J. W. Buckner
Long-time resident of Crossett, wife of the author and librarian for the city.

Buck Carter
Local contractor who built Temple Baptist Church and many other structures in the city.

Vaskell Carter
Mayor of Crossett for over twenty years, living now at 711 Maple Street.

Janice Clark
Columnist for Crossett *News Observer* and correspondent for other newspapers in Arkansas.

Mrs. John Cooper
One of the earliest living residents of Crossett.
Kenneth Crain
Purchasing Manager for Georgia-Pacific Corporation.
Robert E. Crain
Superintendent of Crossett schools, resides at 1406 Hickory.
Mrs. Howard Gates
A registered nurse, formerly Mrs. Spivey. Dr. Spivey was one of the earliest directors of the Crossett Hospital.
Lonnie Gibbs
Over 80, retired asistant plant manager Crossett papermill, lives at 1203 Elm.
Frank Hancock
83, early settler, graduate of Crossett schools.
Jesse Harrison
Former employee of Crossett papermills, member of Millers ball team, resides at 1500 Elm Street.
M. P. Ingram
Long-time resident of Crossett, former employee of the papermills, resides at 1002 Beech Street.
The Reverend Mr. Jackson
Pastor of one of the largest and oldest Baptist churches in Crossett.
Roland Laiche
Former employee of Crossett papermills, member of Millers baseball team, resides at 1001 Oak Street.
Dr. Mike McDaniels
Local dentist, mascot of the Millers ball team, resides at 1315 Elm Street.
Jessie May Green Murray
Former resident, now living in Bastrop, Louisiana.
John Nienhuser
Former administrator of Crossett Health Center.
Mrs. Robert Parkhill
Long-time resident of Crossett, lives in West Crossett.
Bill Perdue
Retired assistant plant manager for Georgia Pacific, living in South Crossett.
Miss Gussie Price
Former teacher in Crossett schools; resides at 1109 Pine Street.

Mrs. R. J. Rainwater
Resident of Crossett since 1932, moth
Buckner, the local librarian.
Gertrude Harville Tooley
Early resident of Crossett, lives at 903
Mrs. Viola Warren
Over 80, former teacher in Crossett sch
Hubert White
Former employee of Crossett paperm
Millers baseball team, resides at 702 M
Hugh Willis
Former superintendent of Crossett sch
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The Reverend Sam Witt
Pastor of the Assembly of God Church
Grady Woods
Retired merchant, life-long resident
lives at 805 Hickory Street.

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members of the church.
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pamphlet distributed by Crossett Lumb
Williams, Cora Gannaway, *The Morning*
was an early resident of Crossett.

Mrs. R. J. Rainwater
Resident of Crossett since 1932, mother of Mrs. J. W. Buckner, the local librarian.
Gertrude Harville Tooley
Early resident of Crossett, lives at 903 Maple Street.
Mrs. Viola Warren
Over 80, former teacher in Crossett schools.
Hubert White
Former employee of Crossett papermills, member of Millers baseball team, resides at 702 Maple.
Hugh Willis
Former superintendent of Crossett schools; lives at 1303 Beech.
The Reverend Sam Witt
Pastor of the Assembly of God Church in Crossett.
Grady Woods
Retired merchant, life-long resident of Crossett area, lives at 805 Hickory Street.

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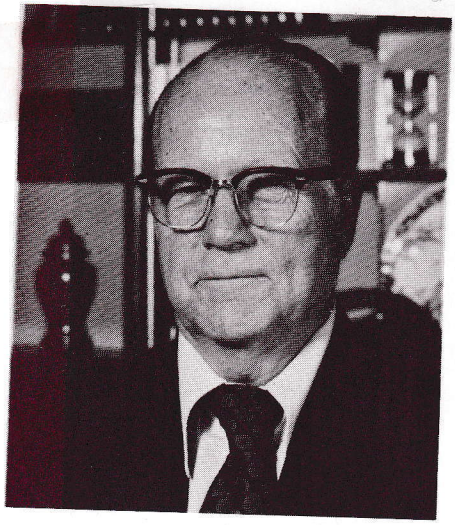

John Wordy Buckner, born in Aloha, Louisiana, December 16, 1907, the son of Martha Elizabeth Buckner and Martin Luther Buckner, has been a pastor and builder of churches since his ordination sixty years ago. He completed high school in Rapides Parish in Louisiana and received a B.A. degree from Louisiana College in 1932. He did his graduate work in The New Orleans Baptist Seminary the following three years.

Some of his pastorates have been the First Baptist Church, Many, Louisiana; First Baptist Church, Jonesboro, Louisiana; First Baptist Church in Crossett, Arkansas; Southside Baptist Church, Bastrop, Louisiana; and Emmanuel Baptist Church, Conway, Arkansas. He is now pastor of the Martinville Baptist Church in Hamburg, Arkansas. He has served on many boards and commissions of the Arkansas Baptist Convention.

In 1957 he was Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in Arkansas. In 1967, he entered graduate school at Northeast University, Monroe, Louisiana, where he received a Master's Degree in history. He has served on the faculties of Northeast University, Monroe, Louisiana, and the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, Arkansas.

Mr. Buckner was elected delegate to the 1979-80 Constitutional Convention of Arkansas and served on the Suffrage and Elections Committee.

Mr. Buckner's first book on the history of Crossett was *Wilderness Lady*, published in 1979. He is married to the former Juanita Rainwater and is the father of three boys and three girls.